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"On This Rock,"

OR,

The Certainties of Faith

BY

DR. H. GRATTAN GUINNESS

F.R.G.S.



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INTRODUCTION

A VAST valley in the Blue Mountains of Australia, covered with dense dark forest growth, and filled with the mists of early morning;—such was the scene which met my eye day by day a few summers since, when, in the Southern hemisphere, resting for a season from missionary work. Islands of rock rose in the distance from the sea of mist, their summits touched by the golden beams of the morning sun; the level clouds spread over the valley looking so dense and sea-like that one could almost imagine it possible to launch a boat upon them, and sail away to the shining hills which bounded them in the distance; while the startling call of wild birds came up from the buried forest below, and echoed among the precipitous cliffs, from whose edge one looked at the entrancing scene. Again and again, in the presence of that majestic spectacle, I was impressed by its likeness to things in the realm of Philosophy and Religion. Philosophy appeared to me to be the dim and doubtful speculation of human reason, feel-

ing its way through the trackless forest beneath the clouds which covered it as a dense veil on every side; while Religion stood on the hills above the clouds, enjoying the pleasant beams of the rising sun.

In the solitude of the Australian Blue Mountains the thought of the preparation of a brief and simple book on *the certainties of Religion as contrasted with the speculations of Philosophy*, which had occurred to me previously when addressing university students in Japan, ripened into the outline of the present work. Since returning to England I have filled in that outline, omitting as far as possible all matters of secondary importance, and briefly setting forth the history of Philosophic Speculation, and the central facts of Religion, as not only contrasted in character, but in position: the former *occupying the lower level beneath the clouds*—clouds destined to be rolled away in the future—while the latter enjoys a place *above those clouds*, in the light of the “Sun of Righteousness,” illuminating with its newly risen beams the glorious prospect.

Facts as opposed to theories, the facts of Religion as opposed to the theories of Philosophy; such, then, is the subject of this work. The prominence given to Philosophy in the modern attack on the Christian faith calls for a consideration of its history. What has that history been but a history of abandoned speculations? That method of reasoning which assigns to indisputable facts their legitimate place and due supremacy needs to be substituted for

reliance on doubtful theories, belonging to the cloudland of thought which, destitute of fixity, disintegrates and dislimbs before the eye which watches its unceasing transformations. The conclusion seems obvious, that we should give facts their due place whatever may become of theories; and that in the consideration of facts we should begin with those which are most proximate and practically important—facts which encompass us in silent majesty, unmoved by the clamour of the multitudinous contending voices of the modern world.

“The conflict of faith in our day,” says Fairbairn, “is most assiduous and fell. It lives surrounded by real or potential enemies. Science cannot publish her discoveries without letting us hear the shock of their collision with the ancient faith. The political philosopher seeks to show how the State can live and prosper without Religion; the ethical thinker, how Right can exist and Law govern without God. A philosophy which denies the surest and most necessary religious truths works in harmony with a criticism that resolves into mythologies the holiest religious histories. A large section of our literature, including some of the finest creations of living imagination, interpret nature and man, exhibit life and destiny, from the standpoint of those who have consciously renounced belief in God, and can find nothing on earth but humanity.” The theory of development which in astronomy, geology, and biology assumed the forms of the nebular hypothesis, the gradual

formation of the present crust of the earth, and organic evolution, "has entered the sphere of History, Metaphysics, and Religion, and presumed to explain everything in the universe—not only things material, including the body of man, but also consciousness, intuition, conscience, the soul, religion, God—the explanation in the last case being, simply, elimination." In this movement of thought, organic evolution was the forerunner of cosmic evolution, and the "universal action of only natural causes discredited any supposed supernatural element in Christianity. Many of the advocates of naturalistic development have gone beyond this extreme, and have asserted boldly that the soul is a mode of matter; thought, a secretion of the brain; the moral law is made by physical law; sin, or what is called sin, is a necessity; freewill, a fiction; and a personal God a subjective delusion."

The outcome of naturalistic philosophy is the blackest pessimism. The theory, says Mr. Balfour, that dwarfs and drags in the dust our estimate of the importance of man, that makes "his very existence an accident," his story only a passing episode "in the life of one of the meanest of the planets"; that, from some unknown origin, after infinite travail, evolves, through strife, famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, a race "with conscience enough to feel that it is vile, and intelligence enough to know that it is insignificant," and then consigns that race, with all its labours, genius, devotion, suffering, and aspirations to

the pit of everlasting oblivion, to be as though it had never been—such a theory does violence to the deepest instincts of reason, and destroys the foundations of morality. "All that gives dignity to life, all that gives value to effort, shrinks and fades under the pitiless glare of a creed like this."¹

Among the facts of Religion opposed to the theories of Philosophy, we give a central place to the *Fact of Christ, and to the place which He occupies in History, Nature, and Experience*. That History is centred in Christ, and that Nature is His witness, is capable of the clearest demonstration. Nature is not only a witness to the Supernatural, without which it could have no existence or continuance, but when most closely interrogated is found to be Christian in its constitution and course. This latter fact claims a more attentive consideration than it has received. The discoveries of modern astronomy, as we show in this volume, prove that the Times and Seasons marked out and measured by the revolutions of the worlds composing the solar system *are those of Redemption Chronology*; that Levitical, Prophetic, and New Testament Historic Times form a closely connected whole, to which the Times of Nature are adjusted in such a way as to demonstrate the action of Supernatural Power and Infinite Wisdom. The new discoveries embodied in the astronomical section of the book give a more exalted view of the Chronology of Redemption than has ever before been reached;

¹ *Foundations of Belief*, pp. 39, 77.

and afford important evidence of the Divine Inspiration of Scripture Prophecy.

No attempt is made in the present work to deal with the whole subject of the Evidences of Religion, natural and revealed. In the matter of the evidences it is "now felt on all hands that the question turns round the life, the character, and the works of Jesus. This is the stronghold which has often been assailed, and never been taken. With it secured, we can defend the whole territory—Old Testament and New Testament, doctrine, history, and morality."¹

¹ M'Cosh, *Christianity and Positivism*, p. 321.

PART I

Below the Clouds ; or, The Speculations of Philosophy

Outline of the History of Pre-Christian Philosophy

THE physical aspect of the world-system was naturally the first to attract the attention of mankind. Early in the history of Grecian Philosophy, we encounter the strangest speculations with reference to the existence of some physical power or agency whose operation might be regarded as the cause of the varied phenomena of nature. Water, from its abounding in the clouds and rains of the air, the lakes, and rivers of the earth, and in the ocean surrounding the land on every side, seemed to Thales, in pre-Socratic times, the universal principle.

Air, as interpenetrating solid substances, as covering every part of the earth and ocean, and as the very breath of life, was supposed by Anaximander to be of greater importance than water, and to be the highest principle in nature. But was not fire mightier than either water or air? Could it not convert water to steam, and heat the air so as to cause it to ascend from the earth? Could it not

melt or consume the most solid substances? Did it not glow in every sunbeam, and was not its presence the secret of the reviving power of spring, and the resistless energies of summer? Surely fire was the universal principle, the highest of all physical qualities. So taught Heraclitus.

But could the unvarying action of fire be regarded as the law governing the universe which neither gods nor men could alter? Was not that law rather of a mental character? Pythagoras responded to the question by reducing everything to number; the opposition between one and many was the cause of all contrasts, of the difference between heat and cold, male and female, good and evil. The idea seemed too abstract for some who clung to a simpler explanation. Why give the supremacy to any one element? Why not admit a plurality of original elements? And so Empedocles taught that there were four such—air, earth, fire, and water—all equally original.

Anaxagoras, carrying out the idea still further, held that there was an infinite number of elements, all uncreated and indestructible. The stars were solid masses which had been torn from the earth.

Descending to the minute, Democritus taught that there was an infinite number of infinitely small molecules, whose union or separation gave rise to existing things. But the mind of man could not rest in such physical speculations.

An age of Criticism followed, in which philosophers

turned their attention from the physical to the moral world. It was a folly for man to be perpetually looking outside himself at the physical world, when a nobler world of intelligence and duty lay open within his being to the scrutiny of thought. Let him look within. So thought Protagoras, who taught that man should abandon the study of sterile causes, and occupy himself with himself.

And so taught a greater than he. Know thyself, said Socrates; the nature of the world, its origin, its end, are hidden from thee, and speculations as to these are vain. Turn thy attention to the moral world; study *what ought to be*; ascertain the aim of life; strive to discover the highest good: for knowledge of these is the only certain, the only useful knowledge. Occupy thyself with ethics. Evil is but the fruit of ignorance. Banish ignorance and become truly, practically wise. Here was indeed a step in advance.

Admirable as it was in many respects, the Socratic Philosophy not only confessedly fell short of the knowledge of nature, but also of the knowledge of God. The Philosophy of Plato soared to a higher region, and fixed its gaze on the immutable, as existing solely in the world of ideas. The models and originals of which all natural things are copies are ideas possessing a separate existence. Among these eternal patterns of things, the highest is the idea of the good. These ideas are real entities, because one and unextended. The absolute good

is lord of the spiritual world, as the sun is the ruler of the visible world. God is supreme goodness, and matter is coeternal with God. From the union of the ideal with the material principle springs the Cosmos. Woman is the degeneration of man. In an ideal Commonwealth there should be a community of goods and wives. Parents should not know their children, the mothers sometimes nourishing one child, and sometimes another. Weak and unhealthy persons should be put to death. The Commonwealth should prescribe for every one his vocation. The freedom and property of individuals should be sacrificed to the good of the State. A strange mixture of truth and error was this Platonic Philosophy: of truth bordering on the realm of the highest realities, with error of the grossest description. Yet how noble was the mind of Plato, and how dominated, even in its erroneous conceptions, by consistency with a lofty aim.

To Aristotle, the father of natural sciences, the first promulgator of the system of deductive logic, the doctrine of Plato, that ideas were real beings existing apart, was untenable. Like Plato, he considered matter to be eternal; but held that together with eternal matter there existed a Supreme Being who was the cause and goal of the forms, the changes, and the order, of the universe. The skies, like the continents of the earth, had their inhabitants, who enjoyed unalloyed happiness. Not that absolute perfection reigned even in those highest realms; for

the planets plainly showed by their independent and irregular motions—sometimes direct and sometimes retrograde—that they occupy a position of hostility towards the universal order, in which evil took its rise. And then, as to the soul of man, it could not be immortal, as Socrates supposed, for immortality belongs alone to the eternal intelligence.

Here we reach the highest point to which Philosophy soared in pre-Christian times. Could it maintain itself there? Were not the stern facts of human experience antagonistic to its lofty explanation of things? And so, under the sense of mundane realities, Greek Philosophy gradually descended to a lower plane. Epicurus taught that while it was possible the Gods existed, it was evident that, if existing, they were unmoved by the sufferings of humanity, and exerted no influence on human destiny. As full of evils, the world cannot be the creation of the Gods. The soul, like the body, is material, and shares its fate. Pleasure is the highest good; but while this is so, the pleasures of the mind are to be preferred to those of voluptuousness, and excess is to be avoided in everything. Virtue, the boasted goal of Socratic Philosophy, is not an end to be aimed at, but only a means to the attainment of pleasure.

What a descent! But had Philosophy reached here any stable ground? By no means. In Stoicism it took the position that God is identical with the Universe. This Pantheistic Deity in some way does

not participate in human passions, and desires our good. Inferior Gods exist, but are not immortal like the Supreme Being. Nature and fate decree all that comes to pass. The law which nature enjoins on conscience is to be followed. Virtue alone can secure happiness, and is to be sought for its own sake, and not for the sake of the happiness it produces. Towards the close of the prevalence of Stoicism, Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius adorned its Philosophy by precepts and attainments of a lofty order, but the system itself, as a compromise between Pantheism and Theism, occupied a lower level than the Platonic Philosophy. Nor could such views maintain their hold upon the inquiring mind.

Sceptical reaction marked the terminal stages of Grecian Philosophy. Pyrrhonism, the philosophy of universal doubt, arose, and boldly maintained the essence of things to be incomprehensible, and that all speculations should be abandoned as useless and pernicious, since they only led to interminable disputes. Carneades, who opposed the Stoics in ethics and religion, delivered two speeches in Rome, one in favour of justice, the other against it. As to truth, we had to content ourselves with probability, and could advance no further. Sextus Empiricus, the last and boldest of the Sceptics, held that everything was doubtful and contradictory. Perfect neutrality in judgement, and indifference in feeling, was the state of mind in which happiness consisted. While

Philosophy thus degenerated into Scepticism, science advanced in Sicily, Samos, and Egypt. Alexandria, under the Ptolemies, became the educational centre of the world. Mathematics and astronomy were cultivated with success, and though the 700,000 volumes of the Alexandrian library perished at the hands of the Saracens, the *Almagest*, with its résumé of the astronomy of the ancients, remains as a monumental witness to the scientific attainments of this remarkable period.

Reviewing the course of Pre-Christian Philosophy thus briefly sketched, we observe that it began with crude speculations as to the elements of the physical universe; that it gradually ascended to moral questions, directing its attention to man himself, and the principles which should direct his life; that from the study of man it ascended to the contemplation of God, whom it regarded as co-eternal with the material universe; that later on it descended to a lower plane, and identified God with the universe; and that, perplexed by the spectacle of human suffering, it denied to this strange God all feelings of compassion, and all influence on the destinies of mankind. That, descending still lower, it came to regard pleasure as the highest good, a view, however, against which Stoicism protested, in teaching that virtue is to be sought for its own sake, and not for the mere sake of the benefit which it may bring; and that, in the closing period of Pre-Christian Philosophy, a stage of universal doubt was reached, and the search for truth

abandoned as useless, opinions the most contrary being regarded as equally entitled to reception; neutrality in judgement and indifference in feeling being lauded as that state of mind most conducive to happiness. And finally we saw that, weary of the vain search for philosophic truth, men turned their attention to physical science, as affording surer ground for understanding, and greater profit as the result of its pursuit.

II

Philosophy of the Middle Ages

GRADUALLY associating itself with the Christian faith, under the plea that the spheres of Philosophy and Theology were the same, Philosophy imposed on Christian thinking in the Middle Ages the logical methods of Aristotle and the Idealism of Plato. A romantic interest like that which hangs about the remains of the feudal castles of the Middle Ages clings to the scholastic theology of Scotus Erigena, Anselm, Abelard, Lombard, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas; in whose massive folios Philosophy and Theology are built into towering structures, intended to be fortresses of impregnable strength, but standing to-day upon the plain of Time as mouldering monuments of antiquated reasoning, neglected and forgotten by a more enlightened age.

The medieval conflicts of Nominalism and Realism seem to modern thought like the clash of mail-clad knights upon the mimic field of battle, which have left but splintered lances and battered helmets on the deserted arena of strife. While the general object

of the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages was to present a systematic exhibition of the substance of Christian truth, a double defect marred their efforts. On the one hand, there was a sad want of Bible knowledge; the study of the Scriptures in their original tongues had ceased, and the Word of God been replaced by tradition, the authority of the Fathers, and the decrees of Popes and Councils; and on the other hand, dialectical argumentation and philosophic reasonings had come in like a devastating flood, leading to presumptuous speculations, the discussion of useless and unprofitable questions, and the prosecution of inquiries with endless distinctions and differences on all sorts of theological subtleties of no practical value or importance.

The system of Thomas Aquinas, who wrote a series of treatises bearing on the metaphysics of Aristotle, marks the climax of the Philosophy of the Middle Ages; and his *Summa Theologica* still forms the basis of the dogmatic teachings of the Church of Rome. From the ascendancy of this great writer in the thirteenth century may be dated the decline of Medieval Philosophy. In the Renaissance, and above all in the Reformation, the revival of learning, and the emancipation of intellect from the rule of ecclesiastical authority, led to the effort to place Philosophy on a new foundation, and to restore the authority of the Word of God.

III

Modern Philosophy

MODERN Philosophy may be said to take its rise from the reconstruction of the method of reasoning and research inaugurated by the celebrated Lord Bacon in the sixteenth century. Abandoning *a priori* speculations and the abused syllogism, Bacon taught that knowledge was to be sought by observation and induction. Logic in the hands of Philosophy had rather served for the confirmation of error than for the investigation and establishment of truth. Men had built the most general axioms on isolated and uncertain phenomena, vainly hurrying to their conclusions, instead of patiently ascertaining and accumulating facts, and cautiously ascending from these by a sure process of induction to the laws and conclusions to which they led. The human mind needed to be purified from abstract theories and transmitted prejudices, which must be cast out as idols of the understanding. The search for knowledge must be reformed from the very foundations, and the barren and fruitless methods of the past relegated to the oblivion they had so long deserved.

The Philosophy of Descartes, which followed half a century later, was abstract and dogmatic in

character. A fresh attempt was made to discover the basis of certitude. Beginning by doubting everything, Descartes found in the act of doubt an evidence of thought, and in the existence of thought a proof of being. "I think, therefore I am." From the certainty of his own existence, Descartes rises to the certainty of God. He finds the idea of God existing in him, and that it occupies an eminent and primary position. Whence has the idea come? How is he compelled to think of a Being more perfect than himself? He himself is finite substance; why should he think of infinite substance? Because the infinite has more reality than the finite. But such an idea does not enter the mind through the senses. How then has it entered the mind? It naturally exists within it, and so existing springs from the source of all things, which must be conceived of as Being possessing the complete fulness of every perfection. "Existence belongs to his true and unalterable nature." He has the ground of his existence in himself, and is the ground of the existence of all beside. Originating in his creative power, thinking substance or mind, and bodily substance or matter, constitute a dual universe. Extension is the attribute of matter, thought of mind. But how are these connected? Some link is required to unite mind with matter.

Investigating this question, Malebranche, who may be regarded as the successor of Descartes, sought to bridge the gulf separating thought and extension

by interposing the activity of God. He conceived that he "saw all things in God." "Unless in some sense," says Malebranche, "we saw God, we should see nothing else." "The mind apprehends nothing whatever except in and through the idea it possesses of the infinite." In thinking of the finite "we sever or deduct something from the general idea of being, which we must therefore possess beforehand."

Baruch Spinoza, the celebrated Jewish philosopher, whose principal works date from 1660-77, starting from the definition of substance adopted by Descartes as that which for its existence stands in need of nothing else, held that there can exist only a single substance. "It is not only the cause of all being, but it is itself all being." "Every special existence is only the modification of the universal substance," which Spinoza calls God. Virtue in its highest form differs from the love of God taught by positive religions, for such love regards God as a Person possessing feelings of love, pity, and anger; a fictitious being, the God not of reason but of imagination. The true God is superior to love and hate, and should be the object of a philosophical love wholly disinterested in character, expressed in a reconciliation with the necessities of life, and the nature of things; a spirit of acquiescence which alone can produce happiness. The difference between God and the soul being obliterated, the love of God and self-love are the same. Immortality is not infinite duration of existence, but the imperishableness of

substance which Philosophy identifies with God. In the writings of Spinoza, inspiration, prophecy, and miracles receive a rationalistic explanation, and the world of morals is subjected to mathematical treatment, as though on a par with the physical certainties expounded by geometry.

In the works of Locke, whose *Essay on the Human Understanding* was published in 1690, the revolt against the abstract philosophy of Descartes and his successors is a prominent feature. A bold attempt is made to prove that our ideas are not innate but acquired, that our knowledge comes to us from without, by the medium of the senses. Philosophy requires to prune her wings, and abandon her vain attempt to understand what passes human comprehension. Let the mind itself be studied, let its tendencies be marked, let its powers be gauged, and their limits be clearly seen and fully acknowledged. "Philosophy must abandon the transcendent problems of substance, essence, and the inner constitution of things, as well as all methods except observation, induction, and experience."¹

The downward step from the Platonic Idealism of Descartes to the Sensationalism of Locke, was followed by a still further descent to the Materialism of Hobbes, Toland, Hartley, Priestley, Helvetius, Turgot, Condorcet, and Baron d'Holbach. To Hobbes all substances are bodies. Matter, according to Toland, is inherently active and does not

¹ *History of Philosophy*, Weber, 389.

derive its motion from transcendent deity. Matter and mind, according to Hartley, differ in degree, but not in essence. The soul is material, according to Priestley. In the view of La Mettrie, the limbs are moved without the aid of the soul, and man is simply a machine. Matter and motion, according to Baron d'Holbach, sum up everything. The universe is not governed by God, but by immutable and necessary laws. Matter alone is immortal. Helvetius regards egoism as the sole motive of our acts, and self-interest as the supreme law of morality.

Under the celebrated David Hume, Philosophy becomes Scepticism. Both the Idealists and the Materialists are ruled out of court. No Philosophy, either of the essence of things or of their causes, is possible. For "abstruse philosophy and metaphysical jargon" we must substitute criticism. Even the principle of causality is destitute of proof. Experience is the only source of knowledge. The soul is an illusion, having no existence save in the constant succession of ideas, and its life ceases with the movements of the body.

Like Hume, the German philosopher Kant held that knowledge of God is an impossibility. He separated knowledge into two departments, theoretical and practical, and while maintaining that pure reason gave no support to the doctrine of a personal God, he taught that that doctrine was "an indispensable postulate of the practical reason," and that the practical reason should take precedence over the

theoretical. From the immense effect of their philosophical views, Hume and Kant may justly be regarded as "the two great fountain-heads" of the Agnosticism of the present day. Kant did not share the utter scepticism of Hume, and was of a wholly different spirit, but his doctrine that our belief in God had for its foundation only the sense of responsibility, or the voice of conscience, which he named the "practical reason," was as truly agnostic as Hume's denial that God could be the object of human knowledge. Kant recoiled undoubtedly from the character and consequences of Hume's scepticism, but the effort which he made to "bridge over the abyss" which Hume had made was a vain one. Both the one and the other held that to know God in any real sense was an impossibility. "The agnosticism originated by Kant has been one of the distinctive and prominent phenomena in the history of religion and theism during the nineteenth century." So writes Dr. Robert Flint, whose work on "Agnosticism" occupies the front rank as a thorough investigation and refutation of that deadly form of unbelief.

To trace in detail the varying modes of modern philosophic thought through Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Hamilton, and Mansel, to Spencer and Comte, is beyond the scope of our aim. Our main concern is with the general drift of the current of Philosophy. There can be no question as to the wide extent of Agnosticism in the present day. It has been popularised by such writers as Huxley and Spencer,

and pervades no small area of modern literature. Herbert Spencer, who candidly confesses that he derived his Agnosticism from Hamilton and Mansel, has built up an imposing system of Philosophy whose foundation stone is the unknowableness of that eternal Power, of which all phenomena, physical and mental, are the manifestations. The *existence* of that unknowable Power is "the one ineradicable and absolute certitude common to faith and reason, religion and science"; but its *character* is inscrutable. As utterly unknown, and unknowable, God cannot be the object of worship and affection, and no revelation of God has ever existed.

With Comte, Philosophy has reached the lowest level in its modern decline and abasement. The final sentence in his *Catechism of Positive Religion* expresses the dethronement of God, and the enthronement of humanity as the "Supreme Being" in His place: "in a word," he says, "Humanity definitely substitutes herself for God, without ever forgetting his provisional services." As the "Great Being" Humanity is to be worshipped in the person of woman, who is practically to take the position as the object of religious adoration which has hitherto been occupied by "the King, eternal, immortal, and invisible."

Though generally rejecting the socialistic dreams and religious vagaries of the French philosopher, the adherents of Positivism boast of the emancipation of the mind from the thralldom of theology and metaphysics, and profess to give their sole adhesion to

science. The thought of man, according to their view, has passed through three consecutive stages, the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. "In the theological state the human mind, seeking the essential nature of beings, the first and final causes (the origin and purpose), of all effects—in short, absolute knowledge—supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings. In the metaphysical state, which is only a modification of the first, the mind supposes, instead of supernatural beings, abstract forces, veritable entities (that is, personified abstractions), inherent in all beings, and capable of producing all phenomena. In the final, the positive stage, the *mind has given over the vain search after absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena*, and applies itself to the study of their laws; that is, their invariable relations of succession and resemblance."¹

This despairing attitude is characteristic of the Agnosticism of the present day, and leaves the way open for the entrance of the light of Revelation. Men are learning the lesson of their own ignorance, and thus their need of divine instruction. This fact is touchingly exhibited in the closing sentences of Herbert Spencer's autobiography. "I have come," he says, "more and more to look calmly on forms of religious belief to which I had in earlier days a pro-

¹ *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*. Translated by Harriet Martineau, vol. i. p. 2.

nounced aversion. Holding that they are in the main naturally adapted to their respective peoples and times, it now seems to me well that they should severally live and work as long as the conditions permit. Largely, if not chiefly, this change of feeling towards religious creeds and their sustaining institutions has resulted from *a deepening conviction that the sphere occupied by them can never become an unfilled sphere, but that there must continue to arise afresh the great questions concerning ourselves and surrounding things*; and that, if not positive answers, then modes of consciousness standing in the place of positive answers, *must ever remain*. Thus religious creeds, which in one way or other *occupy the sphere that rational interpretation seeks to occupy and fails—and fails the more, the more it seeks*—I have come to regard with a sympathy based on community of need: feeling that dissent from them results from inability to accept the solutions offered, joined with the wish that solutions could be found."

Philosophy "fails" to answer the questions which man is compelled to raise concerning himself and surrounding things, "*and fails the more, the more it seeks*." Such is Spencer's parting word. Well may we say, in the words of M'Cosh: "Every one now sees how flickering a light the reason, in the sense of the logical understanding and the reasoning process, can throw on the grand problems of religion, which the heart insists upon having solved."¹

¹ *Christianity and Positivism*, p. 160.

CONCLUSION TO PART I

IN the foregoing pages we have briefly reviewed the history of Philosophy. We have traced the ascent of Philosophy from physical to moral theories, and its twice-repeated descent from the acknowledgment of God to Scepticism and utter unbelief. In the Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle we have witnessed the recognition of goodness as a chief end, and even of a Supreme Being, the cause of the forms, changes, and order of the universe; while in the subsequent history of Pre-Christian Philosophy we have marked its descent to the universal doubt of Pyrrhonism, which maintained the incomprehensibility of all things, and that all speculations should be abandoned as useless, and only leading to interminable disputes.

With the advent of Christianity there came a change over Philosophy, and in the Middle Ages it was held that the objects of Philosophy and Religion were the same, and that both led to the knowledge of God. In the further revival of Philosophy which followed the Reformation, Descartes maintained the certainty of God's existence; Malebranche "saw all things in God," and Locke wrote in defence of Christian truth. Later on, in the works of Hobbes, Toland, Hartley, Priestley, Helvetius, Turgot, Condorcet, and Baron d'Holbach, Philosophy, repelled by its contact with a lifeless and apostate Christianity, assumed the form of Materialism. With Hume it

took the character of Scepticism; with Comte of Positivism; with Spencer and his followers, of Agnosticism. Spencer elaborated a system of Philosophy which made the impossibility of the knowledge of God its corner-stone; and Comte sought by his writings to enthrone humanity in the place of God, as "the Great Being" alone deserving of worship. Schopenhauer completed the descent by teaching that the world, instead of being as some have maintained the "best possible world," is the worst of all. History is merely "an interminable series of murders, robberies, intrigues, and lies, and if you know one page of it, you know them all. The alleged human virtues, the love of labour, perseverance, temperance, frugality, are nothing but refined egoism"; life is "irremediable suffering," and "positive happiness an Eternal Utopia."

A faint gleam of light falls on the troubled sea of speculation in the closing words of Spencer's autobiography, which admit that "the great questions concerning ourselves and surrounding things must continue to arise afresh," and that the sphere occupied by religious creeds "can never become unfilled"; a sphere which "rational interpretation seeks to occupy and fails, *and fails the more, the more it seeks.*" It is well, perhaps, that Philosophy should have vainly sought to fill this sphere, since the attempt has demonstrated its insufficiency. Such a demonstration compels the reflective mind to seek light on these ever-recurring questions from some higher source.

Will that necessity yet change the direction of philosophic thought?

Fair in its youth, like a maiden of noble mien, Philosophy stood long ago beneath the cloudless skies of Greece, and directing its gaze heavenward sought to trace the rays of truth, beauty, and goodness to their supreme eternal source. In riper years of understanding Philosophy became the bride of Religion, and sat for awhile in the halls of Christian universities, and the cathedrals of Christian worship. But a change came over her character; she lost her faith, and was divorced from religion, to wander in dark and devious speculations towards the gloomy borderland of universal doubt and blank despair.

Does a nobler destiny await her? Repelled by the shades of doubt and despair, will Philosophy yet turn to the light of Revelation, and become the Sister of Faith? Adopting a new name, will she yet become a Mary, delighting to sit at Jesus' feet? Is Philosophy to renew her youth, to regain her hope, and, with the meekness of wisdom learned in the school of experience, will she yet set bounds to her speculations, and, while rendering to Reason the things that are Reason's, render to Faith the things that are Faith's?

In the confidence that Truth shall yet prevail we can anticipate her cry, tremulous with emotion, as she emerges from the battlefield of doubt and the sea of speculation, in future years—"Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."

PART II

Above the Clouds; or, The Certainties of Religion

I

The Universality of Religion

FROM this point a pleasing element of certainty attaches to our investigations. We emerge from the mists which have hitherto obscured our view, and behold the pleasant beams of the sun of Truth irradiating the prospect. Elevated above the morasses and quagmires of philosophic speculation, we plant our feet on the firm Rock of Fact, and for the first time enjoy a feeling of security.

The first fact to which we call attention as the simplest and most proximate, is that of *the universality of Religion*, demonstrating the existence of a natural connection between the soul of man and religious thought and feeling; a connection which has existed from the beginning of human history and experience, which exists in all places and circumstances, and which cannot be eliminated from the inner and outer life of man; a connection arising from the nature of man as an intellectual and moral being.

While Philosophy has never been more than the possession of a class, Religion has been the posses-

sion of mankind. What age has ever been without Temples, Altars, Sacrifices, and Worshippers? Range over the world in thought, look back through the ages; recall the temples and religions of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Greece, and Rome; those of India, China, and Japan; the temples whose ruins stand in imposing grandeur on the banks of the Nile, or which lie half-buried in the encroaching sands of the Tigris and Euphrates; which crown the Acropolis at Athens, cumber the Forum in Rome, or tower over the cities, plains, and mountains of the distant East. The Hindoo bows to-day before his shrine, the Burman in his pagoda, the Mohammedan in his mosque, the Jew in his synagogue, the Christian in his church or cathedral.

Everywhere all over the world, man is a worshipper before supernatural powers. Civilised and savage alike confess the claims of Religion; its presence is conspicuous in the regal cities of the one, and the rude huts of the other. The Sabbaths and festivals of Religion control the order of time, and keep pace with the revolving seasons. Universal as the air we breathe, religion compasses the world, and attracts to itself all that is highest in the arts and aspirations of mankind. It has been the prolific parent of creeds, confessions, liturgies, sacred books, and a literature which fills unnumbered libraries. As an educative force it has founded countless schools, colleges, and universities. In its highest forms, it has ministered to the wants and alleviated the miseries of mankind;

it has elevated woman, freed the slave, softened the savage, and provided for the widow and the fatherless. It has created the idea of humanity, and been the parent of the highest civilisations the world has ever seen. To escape from its presence is impossible. "Wherever you turn—man: wherever man—religion." Springing up spontaneously in the human heart, it defies the destructive power of time, and survives all the changes and revolutions of history.

Religion is an upward movement of the human soul. It turns the face of man towards heaven. It has been strikingly said that man is a plant which, rooted in the soil, seeks the sun. Like the plant, he is doubly rooted—rooted down in the soil beneath him, and also rooted up in the sunshine above him. In the plant the branches and leaves may be described as aerial roots, and are as necessary to its existence as the roots hidden in the ground. In the case of man the higher faculties of the mind are the aerial roots, for while he draws the nourishment of his body from the earth, he derives that of his moral and spiritual nature from heaven. This upward direction of the human soul suggests the twofold character of religion, as comprehending the *subjective fact* of its existence and the *objective realities* with which it corresponds.

Religion may be compared to the sunward movement of the seas. For many ages the rise of the tides was not understood, and no comprehension of their movement was reached until their correspon-

dence with the attracting power of the heavenly luminaries was recognised. Two things were discovered to be closely and constantly related, the subjective rise of the waters, and the objective presence of the celestial luminary. Thus no comprehension of the subjective fact of religion is possible without a recognition of the objective realities with which it corresponds. There is a sun behind the cloud above the tidal wave; a sun in obedience to whose influence that wave is lifted up and directed in its unceasing advance.

II

The Supremacy of the Christian Religion

"*SINCE man is unable to escape from religion, that which stands highest and is the best has most claim on his acceptance.*"¹ The Christian religion occupies the front rank in the religions of the world. Its progress from lowly beginnings to its present supremacy fills nineteen centuries of history, and presents a problem of the profoundest interest. "While the Roman world," says Gibbon, "was invaded by open violence, or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion quietly insinuated itself into the minds of men; grew up in silence and obscurity; derived new vigour from opposition; and finally erected the triumphal banner of the Cross on the ruins of the Capitol. Nor was the influence of Christianity confined to the period, or to the limits of the Roman Empire. After a revolution of thirteen or fourteen centuries that religion is still professed by the nations of Europe, the most distinguished portion of human kind in arts and learning, as well as in arms. By the

¹ Fairbairn, *Religion in History and in Modern Life*, p. 78.

industry and zeal of the Europeans, it has been widely diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa; and by the means of their colonies has been firmly established from Canada to Chili, in a world unknown to the Ancients."

The supremacy of the Christian religion may be gathered from the fact that its adherents in the present day outnumber those of any other religion in the world. "The number of those who are living under Christian standards and ideals of moral life and conduct, whether professedly followers of Christ or not, is about 492,865,000," or nearly one-third of the world's population. Its supremacy may further be clearly seen in the fact that Christianity is the religion of the governing races. While Christians are about one-third of the world's population, they govern 891,000,000 of people, that is, about two-thirds of the world. The area under the rule of the various governments of the world is, according to *The Statesman's Year-Book*, about 49,000,000 of square miles. Of this area about 17,000,000 of square miles are under the rule of Protestant nations, 14,000,000 under Roman Catholic rule, between 8,000,000 and 9,000,000 under the rule of nations belonging to the Greek Church, and little more than 8,500,000 under the rule of non-Christian nations.

The growth of the world-dominion of Christian government during the last three centuries has been phenomenal. "Christian powers have increased in the territory under their rule from about 7 per cent.

of the surface of the world in A.D. 1600, to 82 per cent. in 1893; while the non-Christian powers have receded from about 93 to about 18 per cent. during the same period." "Protestant nations alone rule about twice as much territory as all the non-Christian nations combined."¹ The supremacy of the Christian religion is further seen in the undeniable fact that it sets forth conceptions of the Divine Nature, and standards of morality in advance of those of all other religions. Nor are these conceptions and standards without practical influence. Higher advances in education, a purer morality, and more widespread benevolence are seen in Christian than in non-Christian races. As the highest and best of the religions of the world, the most widely spread and the most influential, Christianity has more claims than any other on the acceptance of mankind.

¹ *The Growth of the Kingdom of God*, by T. L. Gulick, pp. 27, 28.

III

The Supernatural Origin and Character of Christianity

CHRISTIANITY exists. It is the religion of the Christian Church whose history can be traced backward to the age of the first Roman Emperors, the period which immediately preceded the fall of Jerusalem. In studying that history we can ascend with certainty from the modern Church to the Church of the Reformation, and from thence to the Church of the Middle Ages; to the Martyr Church of the second and third centuries, and to the Church of Apostolic times. The literature and monuments of each of these historic stages largely remain to the present day; the writings of the Reformers, the Schoolmen, and the Fathers are in our hands; while those of Jewish and Heathen historians complete the evidence. The cathedrals of the Middle Ages tower before our eyes, and the Catacombs and Colosseum of the early centuries lie open to our view. From the works of Augustine and Jerome we can turn to those of Origen, Tertullian, Irenæus, and Justin Martyr, and thence to those of Josephus, Pliny, Tacitus, and

Suetonius, and trace in this way the wonderful history of the Church to the very century which beheld its birth.

I. TESTIMONY OF THE FOUR UNDISPUTED EPISTLES OF PAUL

When we ascend from these to the earliest Christian documents, we find that *four of the Epistles of Paul, those addressed to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Galatians, are admitted by even the most sceptical to be genuine letters of that apostle, written several years before the fall of Jerusalem, which took place in A.D. 70.* These letters are so crowded with local references to current events of the period in question, and so deal with the actual personalities of the time, that it is impossible to attribute to them a later date than the brief interval which lay between the crucifixion of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman arms.

On examining these four unquestioned letters of the Apostle Paul, we find that they contain multiplied references to the origin of the Christian religion, and the life of its Founder. In these letters Paul claims to have seen Christ Himself after His resurrection from the dead, and to have received his apostleship directly from Him. He declares that the larger part of five hundred persons who had seen Christ after His resurrection were alive at the time when he wrote; that he had seen and conversed with apostles

who were the intimate companions and followers of Christ when He was on earth; he tells us that Christ was "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy"; that coming in "the fulness of times," He was "of the seed of David after the flesh"; that He was "made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons"; that having been "rich yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich"; that He was meek and gentle in character, and a pattern of goodness, not pleasing Himself, but bearing patiently the reproaches of ignorant and wicked men; that in the night of His betrayal He instituted the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to commemorate His death, and show forth the unity of His disciples until His Second Advent; that betrayed into the hands of sinners He suffered a shameful and agonising death on the cross; that He was buried, and rose again from the dead on the third day; that He was seen after His resurrection by Peter, then of the twelve, of James, and of all the apostles, and last of all by himself, a man not worthy to be called an apostle because he had persecuted and wasted the Church of God; and that since his conversion and call to be an apostle he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ "from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum," and purposed to carry his message to Rome, and even to Spain on the confines of the Atlantic; and that God had

sealed his testimony with the abundant gifts of His Spirit, and the most blessed demonstrations of the saving and transforming power of the Gospel which he preached.

Paul tells us further that baptism was administered to those who believed in Christ, setting forth their union with Him in His death and resurrection, as dead through Him to sin, and raised up in Him to newness of life; and finally he associates with "the love of God," and "the fellowship of the Spirit," "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," in a benediction expressing the fulness of spiritual blessing bestowed on the Christian Church.

The agreement in their account of the supernatural origin of Christianity of the four unquestioned Epistles of Paul with the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

Let us briefly review the facts.

Paul tells us in these Epistles that he received his apostleship directly from Christ; and the Book of Acts agrees markedly with this, giving us no fewer than three narratives of the events which took place at the call of the apostle by the vision of the glorified Redeemer. Paul states that the larger part of five hundred persons who had seen Christ after His resurrection were alive when he wrote, and the Gospels tell us that the disciples of Christ went by appointment into Galilee after His resurrection, and assembled on a mountain where they beheld and worshipped Him. Paul declares that he had con-

versed with apostles who were the intimate companions and followers of Christ when He was on earth, and the Book of Acts tells us that Barnabas took Paul after his conversion and brought him to the apostles, and "declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus," and that "he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem." It also describes a subsequent reception of Paul and Barnabas by the apostles and first Christian Council held in that city.

In his Epistle to the Romans Paul tells us that Christ was "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy." The Gospels quote many of these promises, and narrate their fulfilment in the ministry of Christ, as sent expressly "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel"; they also declare that on the rejection of Christ by the Jews the ministry of Christ was extended to the Gentiles, a fact which He Himself had repeatedly anticipated, and that His last great command to His apostles was to go into all the world and "make disciples of all nations."

Paul tells us in Galatians and Romans that Christ came into the world "in the fulness of times," and that He was made "of the seed of David after the flesh"; and "born of a woman" by His birth of Jewish descent, was "made under the law" delivered by Moses to Israel. The Gospels tell us that Christ was born

during the reign of Augustus Cæsar the first Roman Emperor, and therefore at the opening of the period when the greatest empire of the world reached the zenith of its world-wide dominion; they trace the genealogy of Christ to David; and present us with a detailed narrative of the birth of Christ at Bethlehem as the child of the virgin mother, Mary of Nazareth, and of His circumcision on the eighth day after His birth according to the Jewish law, under which His birth had placed Him. Paul declares that the object of Christ's subjection to the Jewish law was to redeem men from that position, "that we might receive the adoption of sons"; and the Gospels describe His redeeming work, and tell us that "as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Paul tells us that though Christ had been rich yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich; and the Gospels show how poor He became, lying as an infant in a manger, having later on in the world He had made "no place to lay His head," and yet in His poverty enriching many by His ceaseless gifts. Jesus Christ is described by Paul as a pattern of meekness and gentleness, and this feature is prominent in Christ's portrait in the Gospels; a feature of His character referred to by our Lord Himself as an example to be followed in the words, "learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls." That Christ "pleased not Himself" but bore patiently the re-

proaches of those opposed to the will of God is stated by Paul, and in His history as portrayed in the Gospels this is abundantly seen.

The fact that Christ instituted in the night of His betrayal the commemorative Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, giving to His disciples the broken bread and poured-out wine, with words explanatory of their meaning, as showing forth His death as the atoning sacrifice of the New Covenant, a feast to be ever kept in remembrance of Him, is declared by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians; and the Gospels give a detailed account of the institution of this sacred ordinance by our Lord in the night of His betrayal, at the passover which He kept with His disciples; and record His words on that occasion as to the atoning character of His death, and the command, "this do in remembrance of Me."

Paul dwells much on the shameful and agonising death of our Lord on the cross, glorying more in that cross than in all beside; while the Gospels devote more space to the narrative of our Lord's passion than to any other event or group of events in His history, and make His death on the cross, and the things which led to it, and those which followed it, their chief and central theme. That the body of our Lord was buried in a grave, and that He rose from the dead on the third day, are facts associated by Paul with His death for our sins, as containing the very essence of the Gospel which he preached, which the Corinthians received, and by which they were

saved; and the burial of Christ, and His resurrection on the third day following that of His death, are set forth in the Gospels with all the attendant circumstances, the taking down from the cross, the rock-hewn tomb, the wrapping of the lifeless body in pure linen with precious spices, the sealing of the stone which closed the sepulchre, the setting of the watch, and then the triumphant resurrection on the third following day, with its visions of angels, and revelations of the risen Christ to His disciples.

Paul tells us that Christ, after His resurrection, was "seen of Peter," and in the Gospels we read, "the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Peter"; Paul says He was afterwards "seen of the twelve"; and in the Gospels we read the account of His appearance to the assembled apostles on the evening of the day of His resurrection. Paul speaks of His subsequent appearance to James, and then to all the apostles, and last of all to himself as to one born out of due time. In the Gospels we find James associated with Peter and John as specially favoured with divine revelations, and that these disciples were included among those who more than once beheld and conversed with the risen Redeemer; while the conversion of Paul by a vision of Christ in His resurrection glory is the great event set forth in the Acts of the Apostles as leading to the world-wide ministry of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

The journeys and labours of Paul, to which he refers in his Epistle to the Romans, are described in

the Acts of the Apostles; and his visit to Rome, in fulfilment of the intention he expressed in his Epistle to the Romans, is narrated. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul says, "by one Spirit ye were all baptized into one body"; and in the Gospels this baptism of the Spirit is emphatically foretold by our Lord, while in the Acts the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit with the resulting unity of believers forms a prominent feature of the narrative. The baptism of those who believed in Christ is referred to by Paul both in Romans and Corinthians, while the Lord's command to baptize those who became His disciples is found at the conclusion of the Gospels, and the administration of the ordinance repeatedly recorded in the Acts.

Were the comparison extended still further, it would be found that the Christ and the Christianity of Paul's four unquestioned Epistles are in all their leading features the Christ and the Christianity of the Gospels and the Acts; the morality is the same, the Christian experience the same, the sufferings and conflicts are the same, the opposition of the Jews and Gentiles the same, and the divine interpositions securing the triumph of the Gospel are the same. Along with this agreement, the Gospels and Acts present a continuous history of the life of Christ and the founding of the Christian Church, filling up the narrative by incidents and discourses harmonious with those in which their record so strikingly agrees with that in the Pauline Epistles.

Having now, *through the gateway of these four unquestioned Epistles of Paul entered the four Gospels*, we find ourselves face to face with the life and character of Christ set forth in the latter, and are prepared to consider the truth of the narrative which they contain, and the impossibility of the conception of such a life and character originating in the minds of the Galilean disciples of Christ, or in those of their successors.

II. THE SUPERNATURAL CHARACTER OF CHRIST

Announced beforehand as "that holy thing," Jesus begins His life with a perfect youth, and His ministry with a complete victory over the wiles of the devil; continues that ministry with works of mercy and a warfare with every form of surrounding evil; and terminates it by a supreme act of self-sacrifice, dying on the agonising cross with words of prayer for His enemies upon His lips. Was this the character of man, even of the holiest among men? Where was there any confession of sin or shortcoming? Does not the life of the good man begin with repentance for sin, and is it not marked throughout by the consciousness and confession of sin and unworthiness? But these elements are wholly wanting in Christ. Never regretting anything that He has done or been, He challenges His accusers with the question, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" When the hour of His passion approached, while foretelling the fall of

His disciples He said concerning Himself, "the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." "He judged sin as no man had ever judged it before, and spared it not, whether as incorporated in persons of reputed godliness, or as expressed in acts; whether it lurked in the secret sources of action, lusted in the eye, hid in the thoughts, or sat behind the tongue that feared to break into speech."¹ But He has no consciousness of the existence of sin in Himself; on the contrary, He declared that He always did those things that pleased God, and His life of perfect love to God and man justified the words. Even the enemies of the Gospel have, like the Roman centurion who stood by the cross, been compelled to confess that the character of Christ was superhuman in its sanctity. "Can the Person whose history the Gospels relate," says Rousseau, "be himself a man? What affecting goodness in his instructions! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what ingenuity of justice in his replies! Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a philosopher, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God."

Whence came the portrait of Christ presented by the Gospels? "It is of no use to say," writes John Stuart Mill, "that Christ as exhibited in the Gospels is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the

¹ Fairbairn, *Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 363.

tradition of his followers. Who among his disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee, still less the early Christian writers."

"I esteem the Gospels," says Goethe, "to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendour of a sublimity proceeding from the Person of Jesus Christ, and of as divine a kind as was manifested upon earth." "Let mental culture go on advancing, let the natural sciences progress in ever greater extent and depth, and the human mind widen itself as much as it desires—beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it shines forth in the Gospels, it will not go."

In his *Discourses on Religion*, Theodore Parker says that "Christ unites in himself the sublimest principles and divinest practices, thus more than realising the dream of prophets and sages; rises free from the prejudices of His age, nation, or sect, and pours out a doctrine beautiful as the light, sublime as heaven, and true as God. Eighteen centuries have passed since the sun of humanity rose so high in Jesus. What man, what sect, has mastered His thought, comprehended His method, and fully applied it to life?"

In the light of the acknowledged character of Christ we now consider His supernatural claims.

III. THE SUPERNATURAL CLAIMS OF CHRIST

"Whom say ye that I the Son of Man am?" was the fundamental question which Christ put to His disciples. And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered and said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." Subsequently, when on His trial in the presence of the High Priest Caiaphas, and the assembled scribes and elders of the Jews, Christ solemnly reaffirmed this claim. "I adjure Thee by the living God," said the high priest to Jesus, "that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said unto him, "Thou hast said;¹ nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witness? Behold now ye have heard His blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death."

With this emphatic testimony of Christ agree His declarations that He had come down from heaven to be the Saviour of the world; that He was one with the Father; that He only knew the Father; that to see Him was to see the Father; that His working corresponded with the ceaseless activity of the

¹ Or "I am," Gospel of Mark, xiv. 62.

Father; that as the Father raises the dead and quickens them, so the Son quickens whoever He will; that the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgement to the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. In His relation to men He declared that He was the Light of the World, the Messiah of Israel, the Saviour of the Race, the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep, and gives them eternal life; that lifted up on the Cross He would draw all men unto Him; that He was the Door into the sheep-fold, the way to the Father, the Truth itself, the Resurrection and the Life; that belief in Him secured eternal life, and disbelief in Him involved present condemnation; that He was the True Vine of which His people were branches; that spiritual fruitfulness springs from union with Him; that apart or severed from Him we can do nothing; that He would send the Divine Spirit to convince the world of the sin of rejecting Him, and to be the Teacher and Comforter of all believers; that the Divine Spirit would glorify Him; that all things that the Father had were His; that He had possessed a glory with the Father before the world was; that He had power over all flesh to give eternal life to men; that all power in heaven and earth had been committed to Him; that having come forth from the Father, He was returning to Him; that He went to prepare a place for His people, and would come again and receive them unto Himself; and that He would come in the glory of the Father with all

the holy angels to judge mankind, when all nations should stand before Him, and receive from His lips the final sentence which should determine the eternal issues of their deeds.

Sustained by His character, these unique and supernatural claims of Christ were confirmed by His supernatural works.

IV. THE SUPERNATURAL WORKS OF CHRIST

A series of supernatural works are ascribed in the four Gospels to Christ. His miracles which harmonise with His character and mission, are narrated in the simplest language, and are associated with teachings of the loftiest character. In considering the miracles of Christ we note at the outset that the possibility of miracles will not be questioned by those who believe in the existence of God. "Once admit a God," says John Stuart Mill, "and the production by his direct volition of an effect, which in any case owed its origin to his creative will, is no longer a purely arbitrary hypothesis to account for the fact, but must be reckoned with as a serious possibility."¹

The miracles of Christ harmonise with true views of Nature, Providence, and Grace. "If once we understand," says Farrar, "that the word Nature has little or no meaning unless it be made to include the idea of its Author; if once we realise the fact, which all science teaches us, that the very simplest and

¹ *Essays on Religion*, p. 98.

most elementary operation of the laws of Nature is infinitely beyond the comprehension of our most exalted intelligence; if we once believe that the Divine Providence of God is no far-off abstraction, but a living and loving care over the lives of men; lastly, if we once believe that Christ was the only-begotten Son of God, the Word of God who came to reveal and declare His Father to mankind, then there is nothing in any gospel miracle to shock our faith: we shall regard the miracles of Christ as resulting from the fact of His Being and His mission, no less naturally and inevitably than the rays of light stream outwards from the sun."¹

Yes, if once we recognise the greater miracles of Nature, Providence, and Grace, we shall be prepared to believe in the miracles of Jesus. For Nature itself is a miracle, a work of supernatural Power; its laws did not create themselves, its course is heaven-directed. God has not abandoned the world to itself, but rules it in His wisdom, and has redeemed it in His love. The Incarnation, a miracle of miracles, is accompanied by the miracles of healing and restoration whose records are before us. We believe in the miracles of Christ because we believe in Him. They harmonise with His character, of which they are the expression, and they harmonise with His mission as the Saviour of men: and they do not stand alone, but form the centre and crown of a long series of

¹ Farrar's *Life of Christ*, p. 130.

miracles connected with God's revelation of saving truth to mankind.

Let the great fact be admitted *that God has given a supernatural revelation of His will*, a revelation sustained and sealed by supernatural events, and the miracles of Christ will take their place in the series of providential acts connected with the bestowment of that revelation. That God has done so, is demonstrated by proofs too many to be enumerated, too profound to be doubted by minds not blinded with ignorance, prejudice, or sin. God has spoken: and, God who spoke to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, following His testimony by that of the apostles, and sealing their witness with "signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost." Miracle is linked with miracle, and message with message, in this chain of divine acts and revelations—a golden chain of deeds and words in which the teachings and miracles of Christ occupy a central place.

This association of revelation with miracle is of the highest importance. The miracles are more than supernatural acts attesting a revelation; they are part of the revelation. They yield a light of their own. And in the case of our Lord they are linked with revelations of moral and spiritual truth of the sublimest character, miracle rising into discourse, and discourse illuminated by miracle. To separate between the miracles and teachings of Christ is impossible. We cannot retain the words and reject the deeds.

Like transverse threads of gold and silver, they are inseparably interwoven so as to form a single fabric of unrivalled worth and loveliness.

When from these general considerations we descend to the details of the Gospel narrative, we find other evidences of the reality of Christ's miracles. We do not dwell here as we might on the clear simplicity of the narrative, and its convincing tone of truthfulness, but point out what impresses us as a feature too much overlooked, that it is impossible to account for the crowds who everywhere followed Christ, thronging His person, invading His privacy, breaking through obstacles to get at Him, pursuing Him to the desert, filling the streets with the sick and afflicted, where He dwelt, or where He passed, without admitting the reality of His miracles. Even His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem is only comprehended in the light of the preceding miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead; and the cry of the multitude, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" is but the echo which comes to us of the mighty works of the Prophet of Nazareth.

We may not close this too brief review of the miracles of Christ without adverting to their range. Though only thirty-three of His miracles are recorded, they embrace healing and restoring acts affecting the human body, the mind, and the spirit, and disorder in surrounding nature. To supply the

needs of men He exerted His miracle-working power, feeding the multitudes in the desert in compassion for their fainting condition. He stilled the storm in the outward world, and shed abroad His peace in the inner realm of human consciousness. He raised to life the child who had but just died, the young man being carried to his grave, and Lazarus from the tomb in which he was buried. He never employed His miracle-working power to enrich or defend Himself, or His disciples. He never worked miracles to satisfy the cravings of men for marvels, or to overwhelm them by the display of signs and wonders. His miracles arose naturally out of the circumstances of His life, and the nature of His mission; and they led to the supreme miracle of His resurrection from the dead—a miracle better attested than all the rest, and whose occurrence confirms the existence of supernatural elements in the events of which it was the triumphant termination.

V. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The Resurrection of Christ is "at once the most important and the best authenticated fact in the history of the world," says Dr. Charles Hodge, and he gives the following résumé of the evidence of its occurrence:—

- (i.) It was predicted in the Old Testament.
- (ii.) It was foretold by Christ Himself.

(iii.) It was a fact admitting of easy verification.

(iv.) Abundant, suitable, and frequently repeated evidence was afforded of its actual occurrence.

(v.) The witnesses to the fact that Christ was seen after His death on the cross, were numerous, competent, and on every account worthy of confidence.

(vi.) Their sincerity of conviction was proved by the sacrifices, even that of life, which this testimony entailed upon them.

(vii.) This testimony was confirmed by God bearing witness together with them (Heb. ii. 4; Greek) in signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

(viii.) That testimony of the Spirit is continued to the present time, and granted all the true children of God, for the Spirit bears witness to the truth in the heart and conscience.

(ix.) The fact of Christ's resurrection has been commemorated by a religious observance of the first day of the week from its occurrence to the present time.

(x.) The effects produced by His Gospel, and the change which it has effected in the state of the world, admit of no other solution than the truth of His death and subsequent resurrection. The Christian Church is His monument. All believers are His witnesses.¹

Let us examine some of these evidences.

¹ Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 626.

(i.) *The resurrection of Christ was predicted in the Old Testament.* Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, pointed out the words in the sixteenth Psalm, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption," as a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ which had just been fulfilled. We are familiar with his argument and impressed by its power. David was dead and buried; he could not have uttered these words with reference to himself. Of whom then did he speak but of the Messiah who was to be his promised "seed"; and how gloriously had the prediction been accomplished in Christ, "of the seed of David, now raised from the dead!"

As casting a side-light on Christ's resurrection, we may refer to Psalm lxviii. opening with the words, "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered," and containing the remarkable declaration, "Thou hast ascended up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." The words with which the psalm opens are those which were spoken by Moses "when the Ark set forward" on its journey, leading the host of Israel. And it came to pass when the Ark set forward that Moses said, "Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate

Thee flee before Thee." And when it rested he said, "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel." Can we not see a fulfilment of these words in the scattering of God's enemies which followed the resurrection of Christ? Let the voice of history be heard as to this, and as to the abundant gifts and blessings which descended upon men when Jesus rose from the dead.

Nor may we omit a reference to the remarkable type of the wave-sheaf ordinance annually observed by the Jews in accordance with the law in Leviticus. Three events in the symbolic ordinances of the Jewish sacred year coincided in succession with the death of Christ, with His resurrection, and with the subsequent advent of the Spirit; the feast of Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month of the sacred year, the presentation of the wave sheaf, the first-fruit of the spring harvest, on "the morrow after the Sabbath" which followed, and the feast of Pentecost fifty days later. Remembering the typical character of these Jewish ordinances, and admitting the relation of the Passover ordinance to the death of Christ, and the Pentecostal ordinance to the advent of the Divine Spirit with which they coincided: how can we refuse to admit the typical relation of the presentation of the solitary sheaf of first-fruits, on "the morrow after the Sabbath" succeeding the Passover, to the resurrection of Christ, seeing it not only coincided in time but agreed in character with that event? To

this day the Jews keep this wave-sheaf ordinance on the sixteenth day of the first month of their sacred year, the third day following the Passover, regarding the Passover day as the first in the reckoning. We are not free to build an argument for the truth of the resurrection of Christ on these analogies; but, admitting that His resurrection was foretold in the Old Testament, these side-lights have a confirmatory value, and shed a special interest and glory around the event to which they point.

(ii.) *His resurrection was foretold by Christ Himself.* "Destroy this temple," said our Lord at the outset of His ministry, "and in three days I will raise it up." So memorable were the words that they were quoted against Him at the close of His life, during His trial before Caiaphas. To the unbelieving Jews only the sign of the prophet Jonas was to be given, with its significant resurrection of the prophet after three days of typical death and burial. "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Later on, when going up to Jerusalem with His disciples, He renewed the prediction, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the

Gentiles; and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him: and the third day He shall rise again." Thus with increasing fulness and clearness did Christ predict from the opening of His ministry to the close the death and resurrection which lay before Him.

(iii.) *The proof that Christ rose from the dead, afforded by His numerous appearances to His disciples after His crucifixion and burial.* Luke, the author both of the Gospel which bears his name, and of the Acts of the Apostles, tells us that Jesus "shewed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Four facts are here stated—first, it is stated that Christ "showed Himself alive" after He had suffered death upon the Cross; secondly, that He gave in so doing "many infallible proofs" of the reality of His resurrection; thirdly, that He was seen of His disciples after His resurrection on various occasions during the prolonged period of forty days; and fourthly, that in these appearances He conversed with His disciples, "speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God."

How do other Scriptures bear out this emphatic declaration? (1.) The four Gospels give us detailed narratives of the death and burial of Christ, His resurrection on the third day, and His numerous

appearances to His disciples after He rose from the dead. They tell us that a guard was set by the Jews to watch the sepulchre of Christ lest His disciples should steal away the body; and that early on the morning of the first day of the week, the third day from the crucifixion, some devoted women, including the two Marys, ignorant of the watch which had been set, approached the grave bearing spices, and that as they drew near they inquired among themselves who should roll away the great stone which closed the sepulchre; that on reaching the grave they found to their amazement that it had been rolled away, and learned then, or afterwards, that an angel had descended in dazzling glory, and to the terror of the keepers of the tomb had rolled away the stone; that subsequently they saw two angels in white apparel who said to them, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again"; and bid them to "go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead"; and that, departing from the sepulchre "with fear and great joy, they did run to bring His disciples word." That no sooner did the disciples receive this startling news than they hastened to see with their own eyes what had happened, and that John outran Peter, and arriving first saw the grave was empty, and beheld the linen

clothes which had enfolded the dead body of Christ "laid by themselves," "the napkin that was about His head not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself"; that Peter then reaching the grave, with the impetuosity which had been his characteristic, entered it, and saw what John had seen, the empty tomb and the abandoned cerements; and that, wondering what had happened, they "went away again unto their own home." That Mary of Magdala, returning to the empty tomb, lingered near it in her love and in her sorrow at the loss of Christ, haunted by the thought "they have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and I know not where they have laid Him," which not even the angelic vision could expel from her impassioned soul; and that while standing there absorbed in her sorrow Jesus Himself stood before her, and revealed Himself to her, calling her by her name; and that, turning towards Him with the word "Rabboni," "Oh, my Master," on her lips, moved apparently to cling to His person, or to His garments, lest she should lose Him again, He checked her overpassionate action with the words, "Touch Me not," or rather "Cling not to Me," "for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God"; and that she then went "and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her."

(2) The Gospels declare that Jesus afterwards met

the other women also, who had gone to the sepulchre, and said to them, "All hail!" and, calming their emotions with the words "Fear not," bid them tell His disciples to go into Galilee, saying, "there shall they see Me."

(3) That Jesus appeared personally to Peter, who had denied Him, the details of the interview being left unrecorded; and that the appearance, when reported to "the eleven disciples and them that were with them," led them to exclaim, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon."

(4) That on the same day Jesus appeared to two of His disciples when on their way to Emmaus, a village about eight miles from Jerusalem, joining them as though a stranger, and inquiring the reason of their dejected converse; and that He was answered by one of them, whose name was Cleopas, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" and that hearing His reply, "What things?" they told how their hopes "concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," had been bitterly disappointed by His crucifixion, for they had "trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel"; adding that they had been astonished and perplexed by the report of certain women, disciples of Christ, who had gone early that day to the sepulchre, and had seen "a vision of angels which said that He was alive": and that on

hearing from Cleopas this explanation, the Stranger who walked with them, after reproaching the two disciples for their slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken, asked them the startling question: "*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?*" And that thereupon, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." That on nearing the village they entreated the Stranger who had thus opened to them the scriptures to remain with them, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent"; and that "He went in to tarry with them," and at their evening meal "took bread, and blessed it, and gave to them"; and that suddenly their eyes were opened to recognise that it was the Lord, and that when they knew Him to be Jesus Himself, "He vanished out of their sight." That amazed they said to each other, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and opened to us the scriptures?" and that rising up the same hour they retraced their steps to Jerusalem, and entering the room where the disciples were gathered together, "told what things were done in the way," and how Jesus "was known of them in breaking of bread."

(5) That while these two disciples were thus narrating the appearance of Christ to them, "Jesus Himself stood in the midst" of the assembly, and said, "Peace be unto you"; and that, calming their

fears, He said, "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that *it is I Myself*: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." And that "while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered," He said to them, "Have ye here any meat?" and that receiving some from them He ate it in their presence, and reminding them of His former teaching said, "These are the words which I spake to you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me"; and that, opening their understanding that they might understand the scriptures, He said: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

(6) That eight days after, when the disciples were again gathered together, and Thomas with them, Jesus came, the door being shut, and stood in the midst and said, "Peace be unto you." And that to Thomas, who had refused to credit the testimony of the other disciples that they had "seen the Lord," declaring that unless he saw in His hands the print

of the nails, and felt in His side the wound made by the spear thrust, he would not believe, Jesus said, "Reach hither thy finger and behold My hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side, and be not faithless, but believing"; and that, under the overwhelming sense of conviction, Thomas addressed to Christ the words, "My Lord, and my God."

(7) That Christ appeared to seven of His disciples by the Sea of Galilee—Simon, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and two others, who previous to the great commission to evangelise the world had returned to their temporal employment to obtain support: and that, toiling all night in fishing without success, when morning came they beheld Jesus standing on the shore, but knew not that it was He; that in obedience to His word they cast the net again into the lake, and immediately enclosed a multitude of fishes; and that, reminded doubtless by the incident of former days, John recognised Christ, and said to Peter, "It is the Lord"; and that Peter, girding his fisher's coat on him, leaped into the sea to swim to the shore, and cast himself at the feet of Christ—the other disciples dragging the unbroken net to shore with its multitude of fishes; and that reaching the shore they found a fire with fish laid thereon, and bread beside it, and were invited by the Lord to come and partake of their morning meal: and that this being ended, Jesus thrice asked Peter who had thrice denied Him, "Lovest thou Me?" and

that on Peter's thrice declaring that he did, and appealing to the knowledge of Christ in the words, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee," Jesus thrice over bid Peter devote himself to the care of souls, saying, "Feed My sheep," "Feed My lambs": and that after this, in solemn words of reference to the martyrdom which should end the service of Peter's life, Jesus said to him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hand, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not"; adding the significant command, "Follow Me": and that, turning about, Peter saw near them John, the beloved disciple, and asked, "Lord, what shall this man do?" and that Jesus answered, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."

(8) That, gathered on a mountain in Galilee, the disciples beheld the Lord and worshipped Him, and received from Him the great commission to make disciples of all nations, Jesus saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Referring apparently to this event, Paul tells us in his Epistle

to the Corinthians that more than five hundred of Christ's disciples saw Him on one and the same occasion, of whom "the greater part" remained alive when he wrote.

(9) That "after that" Jesus was "seen of James," as Paul tells us in his Epistle to the Corinthians, an appearance unrecorded in the Gospels.

(10) That later on, the time being come when at the close of the forty days following His resurrection Christ was to be received into heaven, His disciples having gathered at His command in Jerusalem to wait for the promised baptism of the Spirit, beheld Christ on earth for the last time, who led them forth to Bethany; and that, in reply to the question, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in His own power; but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth": and that when He had spoken these words, while He blessed them "He was parted from them and carried up into heaven," a cloud receiving Him out of their sight.

(11) That after His ascension Christ was seen in His resurrection glory by Saul of Tarsus, who included himself among those who beheld the risen Christ in the words: "Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the

least of the apostles, and am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God."

(12) To which we may add that, in His post-resurrection appearance to John in Patmos, Jesus said, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of Hades and of death."

(iv.) *The evidence of the resurrection afforded by the words of the Risen Christ.* In these utterances we move in a new sphere, and we are profoundly conscious of it. Clouds have rolled away. Morning has come. It is the same Christ who speaks—the Christ of Galilee, of Calvary; but His outlook is changed. Instead of looking forward to the Cross as in His earthly ministry, He looks back upon sufferings which are passed; instead of fulfilling particular predictions, He points to the fulfilment of inspired prophecies as a whole; He opens the Scriptures as never before; the tone is one of fresh and lofty instruction; there is nearness still in spirit and in promise, and yet a separateness and elevation altogether new; the old relations to individuals remain, but the world relations are wholly different. He is still the Comforter of sorrow, the Saviour from sin; but He has passed into another life whose limitless ascent lies open to His view. Mary is still loved, Peter's thrice-repeated denial remembered, John is still distinguished by special favour; the "Thou shalt follow Me afterward" of the earlier

prediction as to Peter is changed to the clearer announcement of a martyr-calling and the deep meaning command, "Follow Me." The marks of a bygone Calvary are pointed to in correction of incredulity, yet the faith that should take the place of vision is put in preference above the conviction produced by sight; on the familiar shores of Galilee a past miracle is repeated, but in a new form and with new and larger meaning; the love of the Shepherd for the sheep and the lambs is still the same, but He no longer personally feeds and gathers them as once, but calls a disciple, who loved Him all the more because much forgiven, to be their visible guardian and their guide. Judæa, Samaria, Galilee no longer limit the exercise of His ministry, but the world with its "all nations" has become the sphere of His saving activity; His personal ministrations are replaced by those of chosen heaven-qualified agents, sent forth to continue His work and act in His name; and a Power and Presence promised of an unseen and spiritual kind, which should take the place of the limited and visible aid of former days, and should continue, unlike the transitory and interrupted assistance of the past, even to "the end of the age."

This heaven of thought and action is beyond the creative power of man. It rests on no earthly foundations. So far are these thoughts and utterances from being the creation of the Church, they have created it; and even now the Church falls short, how far

short, of their full comprehension, and of the complete realisation of their large and lofty purposes. Yet are they the sphere in which she has had her being for nineteen centuries, and that in which she lives and moves to-day.

But not only are the utterances new, and of a largeness of scope and loftiness of purpose inexplicable on purely natural grounds, but their accompaniments are worthy of their celestial character. Angels have entered the lowly scene of the Redeemer's action. An angel rolls away the stone from the sepulchre. Two angels sit within the tomb, guarding and contemplating the place where the body of Jesus had lain. From angel lips proceed the thrilling question, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" The angels say, "He is not here, He is risen," and remind His earthly disciples of His past predictions, and of how His words had been fulfilled. And when He ascends angels are witnesses, and linger when He is gone to direct the thoughts and hopes of the men who with them had watched the sublime termination of the Redeemer's ministry, to the promise and prospect of His returning again "in like manner" as He had departed.

Are these vain imaginations of ignorant Galileans—these acts of sublimity, these visions of glory, these words of celestial understanding, consolation, and rebuke? Or are they the unadorned records of actual and amazing facts proper to a narrative which from its commencing paragraph has revealed a

Divine intervention on behalf of men to open to them a higher sphere of existence, and lead them to enter its glorious portals? Should angels be seen and heard at the Nativity, and none be seen or heard at the Resurrection close? No, in being where they are, they are where they should be; pure and lofty as ever, yet the lowly servants of the Son of Man, ministering spirits gazing with delight into the depths of Providence and mysteries of grace, while swift of wing to succour and to serve the heirs of salvation.

The attempts of incredulity to explain away the resurrection of Christ have met with dismal failure. No theory has ever been invented by the fertile brain of man which can account for the facts we have here to deal with in any non-miraculous sense. The Jews took the lead in denying the resurrection, by circulating the falsehood that the disciples had come by night and stolen the body of Jesus. This view, which regards the apostles and early Christian witnesses as immoral plotters, conscious liars, and barefaced impostors, has long been abandoned as disproved by their demonstrated sincerity and holiness, men who were the foes of falsehood in every shape and form.

The "visionary hypothesis," that the appearance of Christ to His apostles and others as risen from the dead were deceptive and unreal, is disproved by the case of Thomas, who was commanded to touch the wounds in His hands and His side; and by "the rush of conviction" produced by the command. It is utterly disproved by the copious recorded utter-

ances of Christ after His resurrection which we have been contemplating; teachings which "beginning at Moses and all the prophets" expounded to the wondering disciples "the things concerning Himself."

The sceptical hypothesis, that the story of Christ's resurrection was only a myth developed in the second century when the actual facts had faded from the memory of the Church, is utterly disproved by the testimony of Paul's four undisputed Epistles, confessedly written within the lifetime of those who claimed to have witnessed the event. Driven to desperation, a section of Rationalists have put forward the view that Christ did not die on the cross, that He was taken down from the cross and buried while alive, and that on the third day He crept forth from the tomb, and was seen by some of His disciples, only to withdraw from their view and die of His wounds in secret, and be buried again in an unknown grave. But even such sceptics as Strauss have pointed out the incredibleness of any such explanation of the facts. "One who had thus crept forth half-dead from the grave," says Strauss, "and crawled about, a sickly patient, who had need of medical and surgical assistance, of nursing and strengthening, but who notwithstanding finally succumbed to His sufferings, could never have given the disciples the impression that He was the Conqueror over the grave and death, and the Prince of Life. Such a recovery could only have weakened, or at best given a pathetic tinge to the impression which

He had made upon them by His life and death; but it cannot possibly have changed their sorrow into ecstasy, and raised their reverence into worship."

VI. THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

The ascension of Christ was witnessed by all the apostles. The Gospels of Mark and Luke end with the record of the event, and the Book of Acts begins with it. "Without controversy," says Paul, "great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

The narrative of Christ's ascension crowns that of His resurrection, and completes the story of His redeeming work. Not His death to atone for sin, not His resurrection from death and the grave, but His ascension is the true goal to which His incarnation and mediatorial action led. This fact has been much overlooked. Not till Christ ascended did He enter as the High Priest within the veil, "having obtained eternal redemption for us."¹ Then, and not till then, did He sprinkle with the blood of His atonement the mercy seat of God.² Then, and not till then, did He, His atoning work completed, sit down "at the right hand of the Majesty on high."³

¹ Heb. ix. 12.

² Lev. xvi., compared with Heb. ix. and x.

³ Heb. i. 3.

We shall point out later on how remarkably the correctness and importance of this view is confirmed by the Times and Seasons of Redemption Chronology.

The place chosen as the spot from which the ascension of Christ took place was Bethany, as near Jerusalem, yet hidden from it by the intervening summit of the Mount of Olives. From Bethany an extensive view is obtained of Eastern Palestine; the Judæan hills, the Jordan valley, and the long range of the Moab mountains lie before the gaze. On this prospect rested the eyes of Christ as He gave His disciples their final charge, as those who were to be His witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Standing there, with uplifted hands He blessed them; "and it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen." Thus ends the wondrous story of the life of Christ in Luke's Gospel, and the statement bears in every word the stamp of truth and reality. Peter refers to the ascension in language singularly appropriate to an eye-witness of the event: of the ministry of Christ he said, "Who went about doing good,"¹ and of His ascension, "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made

¹ Acts x. 38.

subject unto Him."¹ Jesus had simply "gone into heaven." He had seen Him go. And now Christ reigned in that heaven to which He had gone. To Paul the ascent of Christ to heaven was the natural sequence of His previous descent to earth; "now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things."² And the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the various gifts of ministry bestowed upon the Church for the benefit of mankind, were consequences of the ascension, for "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."³

The ascension of Christ was unlike any other ascension referred to in the Word of God. It had a character all its own. Not as the rapture of Enoch, who "walked with God," and "was not," having simply disappeared from among men, was the ascension of Christ; but a visible return to His native heaven. Not as the rapture of Elijah, that sudden and startling departure of the prophet in a chariot of fire with horses of fire, was Christ's calm sublime ascent. Not as Paul's rapture, "whether in the body or out of the body" he knew not, to the "third heaven," to hear words impossible to be uttered to men on earth, was this ascent of Christ in the body in which He had suffered, transformed and deathless,

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 22.

² Eph. iv. 9, 10.

³ Eph. iv. 8.

with the clear light of intelligence and full self-consciousness beaming on His face, to receive revelations in heaven, the opening of the seven-sealed book of futurity, and communicate those revelations to His Church on earth in her militant estate. And not as the rapture of the Church that is to be, caught up in a moment, with the sound of the Archangel's voice, and that of the trump of God filling all the skies, was Christ's ascent. No audible voice called Him to the heavens: no trump of God awoke Him as from sleep, and bid Him rise. Without an effort, without the aid of angelic wing or fiery chariot, as though traversing some well-known path, with words of benediction and farewell falling from His lips, He went up into the visible heavens, and ascending through them in solitary sublimity to the splendour of His destined throne, was hidden from mortal gaze by a cloud, which passed and left naught to view but the pure azure through which His form had gone.

VII. TRANSFORMING EFFECT OF THE RESURRECTION

The reality of the resurrection of Christ was demonstrated by its marvellous and immediate effects.

First of all we witness "the sudden revolution in the frame of mind and in the behaviour of the disciples of Christ. Before the resurrection we see the disciples so fearful, they scatter when the Master is bound; the most courageous of them denies his

Lord before a servant girl; only secretly do they dare to meet with 'doors shut for fear of the Jews';—and afterwards, though holding their lives in their hands, they step forward so fearlessly before the whole nation, before the judges and murderers of their Master, and preach His resurrection with a joyousness that cannot be intimidated by any threats or ill-usage. Beforehand, they are so shaken and broken down by the sudden death of their Messiah that their hope in Him as the Redeemer of Israel is vanished, their own future and that of the faith is enveloped in impenetrable darkness; and suddenly a light of hope is kindled in them which even the most violent storm of persecution cannot extinguish. All at once they are clearly conscious of their vocation; an intrepid joyous faith—a consciousness of victory—fills their hearts, and impels them to go to Jews and Gentiles to conquer the world for their Master, and upholds and comforts them in tribulation and death.

"And this new faith finds an entrance everywhere; only becomes stronger and more firmly rooted through opposition and persecution; can be damped by no power either of the sword or of science; in a stupendous revolution it conquers the world, and regenerates it morally and spiritually; it embodies itself in a living and growing Church which has penetrated to all nations, and already lasted for eighteen centuries. The enormous weight of these historical effects produced by belief in the resurrection must crush every effort to derive it from anything

but the fact that Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer of the world, did actually burst the bonds of death by rising that Easter morning."¹

VIII. THE GOSPEL OF THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection of Christ not only transformed the Men, but the Message. Its effect here is manifest and profound. For whereas in the preaching of the prophets, of John the Baptist, and even of our Lord—as witness His Sermon on the Mount—no supreme prominence is given to the resurrection from the dead, now it becomes the leading fact of testimony, and takes its place as a fundamental article in the Christian faith. How strikingly is this seen in Paul's definition of the Gospel which he preached, which the Corinthians received, wherein they stood, and by which they were saved: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

The three historic facts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, viewed in their relation to sin and salvation, constituted the sum and substance of the preaching of this great apostle. And further, in the recorded discourses of the period, the chief events in Jewish history are regarded as leading up to this supreme event as to their goal. Thus Paul, in his

¹ Christlieb, *Modern Doubt and Christian Belief*, p. 499.

discourse to the Jews recorded in the thirteenth of Acts, beginning with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, traces Jewish history through the forty years' wilderness wandering, the conquest of Canaan, the four hundred and fifty years under the Judges to the ministry of Samuel, the forty years' reign of Saul, and the anointing of David to be king of Israel. "Of this man's seed," he says, "hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." Then glancing at the Messianic testimony of John the Baptist, he advances to the fulfilment of Scripture in the rejection and crucifixion of Christ, His burial, and His resurrection from the dead. "When they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre. *But God raised Him from the dead:* and He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again. . . . Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye

shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

In this characteristic discourse every step in the historic narrative leads up to the resurrection of Christ; and, reaching that great fact as the goal of the message, closes with words of application whose solemn warnings against unbelief must have sent a thrill of emotion through those who heard them, whether they received or rejected the testimony.

IX. THE WITNESS OF THE LORD'S DAY TO CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

From apostolic times to the present day the whole Christian Church has kept as sacred one day in the week, in commemoration of the fact that Christ rose from the dead. This is the more remarkable because in this observance the first day of the week has been substituted for the seventh, although the command to keep holy the seventh day, or Sabbath, was one of the great commandments of the Mosaic law. The Christian Church was born under a Sabbatarian law, but has abandoned it. She no longer keeps sacred the seventh day of the week. She has shifted the weekly day of rest from the seventh day to the eighth. She no longer ends the week by an observance which looks back to the completion of the old Creation, but begins it by an observance which records the commencement of a new Creation. And she does this in testimony to the glorious truth that

Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week.

Week by week returns that day with its resurrection story and resurrection hopes. The chime of its bells peals forth the glad message, Christ is risen. Its songs awaken resurrection memories, and give expression to resurrection joys. The heave of the tidal ocean of the Church's life sends its waves on that first day of the week to every shore. No effort of man can arrest that witness; no law can abrogate the sacred observance of that resurrection day. While the Church of Christ continues shall it remain, bearing its witness in the future as it has done in the past to the truth that on the first day of the week, as "the first-fruits of them that slept," Jesus rose from the dead.

X. THE WITNESS OF LIFE IN THE RISEN SAVIOUR

Christian experience is that of resurrection life. Two great analogous events are set before us in the New Testament, and declared to have been accomplished by the same power: the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the quickening of souls to newness of life. Thus in his Epistle to the Ephesians Paul dwells on the "exceeding greatness" of God's power to usward who believe, "according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set

Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places," and in quickening us "who were dead in trespasses and sins," declaring that He has "quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

We are reminded by these words that the power which works in believers is far greater than is generally understood. It is a greater power than that which causes the sun to rise, and the spring to return with its quickening influences, for these act according to the course of nature, but here is that which is contrary to nature, which arrests and reverses its course, and triumphs over its ruin and destruction. Here is a power, the scope of whose influence embraces earth and heaven, which lifts its objects from the sepulchre to the throne. Here is a power whose mighty action has been already demonstrated in the wondrous human experience of the Son of Man, who has been raised from the cross and the grave to a place at "the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens"; and which is daily exerted in raising dead souls to newness of life, and renewing believers: accomplishing thus a double resurrection work, a work which advances continually towards the foretold consummation in which death shall be swallowed up in victory. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," says the Apostle Paul, "hath made me free from the law of sin and of death."

Marvellous words! Here is resurrection life

operating as law in human experience. There is the law of sin, for sin reigns in the ungodly; there is the law of death, for death reigns in that all are mortal; and there is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," whose operation raised Christ from the dead, and which raises our souls now from spiritual death, and shall yet raise our mortal bodies and conform them to the image of the glorified body of the Risen and Ascended Christ; life ceaselessly operating as a law, in Him and in us, the life of God, the life of immortality.

Our personal experience of this quickening of the soul, and this liberating action of the Spirit of life, is a witness to the reality of Christ's resurrection; an inward witness of which no argument can rob the believer. He knows he was once dead in sin; he knows that he is now alive to God and spiritual things. He feels the workings of the old nature in him and of the new, of flesh and spirit, and the warfare which exists between them; that he is crucified with Christ, and that Christ lives in him. He knows what it is to walk in the Spirit by which he lives; and he knows that this is life in a risen Saviour, the risen Christ who sent forth the quickening Pentecostal Spirit, and maintains by that Spirit the life of His Church.

XI. THE APPEAL OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION TO THE CONSCIENCE AND THE HEART

Christian evidence appeals to reason. But man is not a mere thinking machine. The light that is in

him is more than the light of intellect. He is a moral being, possessed of moral intuitions, and an emotional being, capable of loving and returning love. A religion which appealed simply to reason would therefore be defective, as lacking adjustment to man's nature as a whole. And further, the moral nature of man is superior to the intellectual, and claims sovereignty in the direction of the will. Hence true religion must appeal supremely to man's moral nature.

Now, on a study of the Christian religion what do we find? We find that *Jesus Christ is a personal manifestation of the Divine Love*; that His teaching was addressed to the *conscience* and the *heart*, and that this personal manifestation, and these moral and spiritual teachings, effect what no mere appeal to reason can effect, the moral transformation of the character of men.

Jesus Christ did not win the world by philosophic teachings, or by processes of reasoning. He used other methods, placing His power chiefly in the supreme self-sacrifice of the Cross, as He said: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." The conversion of the world was not effected by His miracles. As His teachings were commonly rejected, so His miracles were misinterpreted, or regarded as wonders to be gazed at and no more; and as a result His ministry closed without producing any national or world-wide effect. A few hundreds were converted, only to be scattered by persecution. Yet He

succeeded, and has effected what no philosophy, no appeal to reason, no miracles, could effect. How has He accomplished this?

"To elicit trust, to draw out affection, to change the strong current of the will," He made His appeal to the heart. No laboured arguments proceeded from His lips; straight to the conscience went the arrows of His words. Through His countenance God looked on men. The smile that lighted, the sorrow that shaded that countenance, the tear that fell, the grief that furrowed, the pallor that spread upon the thorn-crowned brow, spoke without words what no language could have uttered. The heart has its language as well as the intellect. Love makes the look its portal. It is seen, not heard. Soul looks into soul, so is it known.

This view of things justifies the method of the Christian religion. That religion has "love for its main power, and love as its sole end." It is "not an afterthought acted upon in consequence of the failure of a former plan"; but a moral method suited as nothing else could be to the revelation of God to man, and the reconciliation of man to God.

True religion is a personal response to a personal revelation. Christ knew the secret of the human heart. How best to draw away the attention of men from things temporary and unworthy, and "to beget in them hopes, fears, desires, attachments, and joys, which could occupy themselves with things imperishable, unchanging, inexhaustible; how to

attract them from the lower sphere of being in which they would continue to move, up to that higher sphere in which the more exalted attributes of nature might have fit and delighted occupation,"¹ He, and He only, divined. Men could only love God by beholding Him; and Him they saw most clearly when undraped upon the cross.

No raiment of royalty enwrapped His limbs; no sceptre was in His grasp; no crown of splendour adorned His brow. No congregated hosts attended His person, or bowed to His commands. Alone He stands amid the mocking crowd: alone in speechless grief He hangs upon the cross. Stripped of everything but righteousness and love, amid His enemies, and for His enemies, He dies. Let the truth once enter into the soul that this great act *has a personal bearing upon it*, and its attitude towards God changes, and becomes transformed. God is known, trusted, loved, as never before. God in Christ has become the religion of the heart and of the life.

XII. THE SPIRITUAL APPREHENSION OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ, *divinely apprehended as divine*, is the rock on which the Christian Church is built, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," said Peter to his Master. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona," answered Christ, "for flesh and blood hath not re-

¹ E. Miall, *Bases of Belief*, p. 102.

vealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." Two sources of knowledge are here contrasted, the human and the divine.

In his knowledge of Christ, Peter was not taught of man but of God. The entrance of this knowledge is thus described by the Apostle Paul: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, *hath shined in our hearts*, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."¹

This spiritual perception, says Jonathan Edwards, whose excellent discourse on the subject we condense, is "a true sense of the divine excellency of the things revealed in the Word of God, and a conviction of their truth and reality thence arising." This intuition and immediate evidence is produced by the Spirit of God. The view that such an illumination should exist is not only scriptural but rational; for it is rational to suppose that there is really such an excellency in divine things, so transcendent and exceedingly different from what is in other things, that if it were seen would most evidently distinguish them.

We cannot rationally doubt but that things divine, which pertain to the Supreme Being, are vastly different from things that are human; that there is a high, glorious, and godlike excellency in them that does most remarkably difference them from the things that are of men; in so much that if the difference were but seen, it would have a convincing, satisfying influence upon any one, that they are divine.

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 6.

And further, it is rational to suppose that this knowledge should be immediately given by God. It is a kind of emanation of God's beauty, and is related to God as light is to the sun, the perception of which no more belongs to reason, or the inferring by arguments, than it belongs to the sense of feeling to perceive colours, or to the power of seeing to perceive the sweetness of food. *Reason's work is to perceive truth and not excellency.* It is no more ratiocination that gives men the perception of the beauty and amiableness of a countenance, than it is reason that perceives the sweetness of honey.

This knowledge is above all other sweet and joyful; it is the dawning of the light of glory in the heart. It influences the inclination, and changes the nature of the soul; for "We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." This knowledge weans from the world, and turns the heart to God as the fountain of good, to choose Him for one's only portion; a light of knowledge which has its fruit in holiness of life. It draws forth the heart in sincere love for God, which is the only principle of a true, universal obedience.

Persons of mean capacities and advantages are as capable of this knowledge as those of the greatest ability and learning—a knowledge "hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the

heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii.).

Resting on this inward revelation, the faith of the true Christian does not "stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

XIII. NONE OTHER NAME

Who but Jesus Christ has ever addressed himself to the work of the salvation of the world? Who but Jesus Christ has ever effected anything worthy in that direction? Who but Jesus Christ has ever satisfied the needs and longings of a single human soul? Certainly not the philosophers, nor the kings and conquerors, nor the founders of heathen religions. Moses never undertook to save the world; Mahomet, though he claimed to have received celestial revelations, never set himself forward as the Saviour of mankind. Confucius only claimed to be a teacher

of morality, Mahomet to be a prophet; but Jesus declared that he was the Light of the World, the Saviour of sinners, the Judge of mankind. "Will ye also go away?" said Christ to His disciples; "Lord, to whom shall we go?" answered Peter, "Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." To whom shall the sinful, the self-accusing, the miserable, the lost and perishing, turn? To whom but to Thee? For, as Peter says to his Jewish judges later on, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Time, which tests all things, has proved the truth of this. No religion but Christianity possesses the power to heal the plague of sin, to satisfy the claims of conscience, to produce the unselfish love which devotes itself to the service of mankind. Other methods have been tried, but they will not work. In recent times this has received a striking illustration in the failure of the non-Christian efforts of Mrs. Besant and others, to create the spirit of unselfishness among the working classes in the East End of London.

In relation to her attempt to realise without the power of Christianity "the brotherhood of man," Mrs. Besant says: "Ever more and more had been growing on me the feeling that something more than I had was needed for the cure of social ills. The Socialistic position sufficed me on the economic side; but where to gain *the inspiration, the motive* which

should lead to the realisation of the brotherhood of man? *Our efforts to organise bands of unselfish workers had failed.* Much indeed had been done; but there was not a real movement of self-sacrificing devotion, in which men worked for love's sake only, and asked but to give, not to take. Where was the material for the noble social order, where the hewn stones for the building of the Temple of Man? A great despair would oppress me as I sought for such a movement and found it not."

This conclusion was reached after fifteen years advocacy of Free-thought and Socialism, and the attempt to raise the sunken masses by these means. Such failures, and history is full of them, shut us up to Christ. His religion is "not in word, but in power." It does what nothing else can do. It renews the heart. It creates within the soul a spring of pure unselfish love, which overflows in labours for the highest welfare of all mankind.

IV

The Place of Christ in History

FROM our study—all too brief and fragmentary—of the Person and religion of Christ, we advance to the consideration of *the Place* which He occupies in History and in Nature. The subject is one of the deepest interest and importance. The Person and Religion of Christ are not destitute of foundation, like a castle or cathedral standing in the air; but are vitally and formatively connected with the order of history and nature. He is not only historical, but He has given its course to history; He has not only entered into nature, but He has imparted to it the form it possesses.

That Christ occupies a formative position in relation to the Christian Church and the modern world is obvious, since He was the Founder of the Church, and the Author of all that is noblest in Christian civilisation. The standard of morals has been elevated by His teachings and example. By Him woman has been raised from degradation, and the slave emancipated from bondage. The labouring

classes and the poor have widely felt the uplifting influences of the religion of Christ; education owns its transforming power; and through its influence governments have adopted juster laws. Where once were gladiatorial shows and the slaughter of prisoners and captives of war, hospitals for the sick and asylums for the widow and the fatherless have been erected. The idea of humanity has been created, as resting on the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. And this uplifting influence is acting on whatever of barbarism still remains in the world; inhuman laws and customs are slowly but surely being abolished; infanticide, widow-burning, child-marriage, the torture of prisoners, the horrors of the slave trade, are being swept away. Christ, who overthrew the Judaism of the Pharisees and the heathenism of the Cæsars, has introduced among men liberty, mercy, and charity, and saved the world from the danger in which it lay at the beginning of our era, of perishing in its own corruptions.

Nothing can compare with the effect of Christ's advent on the history of the world. It is an indisputable fact that "of all the influences that have been exerted on this earth, that of Jesus has been the most potent. Enumerate all the great men who have ever existed, whether Kings, Conquerors, Statesmen, Patriots, Poets, Philosophers, or men of Science: and their influence for good will be found to have been as nothing compared with that which has been exerted

by Jesus Christ."¹ Properly to appreciate the Person and religion of Christ, the study of the Gospels must be supplemented by the study of history. "We have not solved," says Fairbairn, "we have not even stated and defined, the problem as to the person of Christ when we have written the life of Jesus; for that problem is raised even less by the Gospels than by Christ's place and function in the collective history of man; or, to be more correct, by the life described in the Gospels, and the phenomena represented by universal history viewed in their reciprocal and interpretative inter-relations.

"If the Gospels stood alone, the problem would be comparatively simple; indeed, there would hardly be anything worth calling a problem, for they are concerned with events which happened in time, and with an historical figure whose antecedents, emergence, circumstances, behaviour, experiences, fate, words, are exactly the sort of material biography loves to handle. But the very essence of the matter is that *the Gospels do not stand alone, but live as it were embosomed in universal history*. And in that history Christ plays a part much more remarkable, and much less compatible with common manhood than the part Jesus plays in the history of His own age and people. And we have not solved, or even apprehended, any one of the problems connected with His Person until we have resolved the place He has filled, and the things He has achieved in the collective life of man."²

¹ Rowe, *Bampton Lectures*, 1877, p. 93.

² *Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 13.

The dicentric Character of History as related to the first and second Advents of Christ

"Human history," says Dr. Henry Smith, "has no other centre of convergence and divergence than the CROSS on Calvary." He adds: "History has no other prophetic end than the KINGDOM of Emmanuel." All the great movements of human history are centred in one or other of these two supreme events. Sacred Jewish and Christian history flow to and from the first Advent and the Cross of Calvary; while secular Gentile history, including the course of the four great Empires, has its goal in the second Advent and the manifested kingdom of God. As in the animal world the *heart* and the *head*, the *hæmal* and *neural* centres, are connected with the support of life and the control of movement, so in history *the Cross of Christ is the vital heart of the system, and His kingdom its glorious head*. The Advent of Christ to suffer and His Advent to reign are the poles of history; the *life centre* and the *rule centre* of the world.

History centred in the Cross

"The seemingly isolated and fragmentary events of history," says Dr. Henry Smith, "are parts of one connected and orderly series, of which the divine providence is the method, human welfare the chief subject, and the divine glory the last chief end." "History as a mere chronicle of facts has indeed its

value: but history as the biography of humanity, binding together all the empires and races that have peopled the earth in one unfolding plan reaching already through six thousand years of time; centring in one kingdom, which began in the beginning to be consummated only at the end; progressive, conflicting, never subdued and ever victorious, the only kingdom which has survived all change and has the high augury of final supremacy—human history, when thus viewed, is more than human; it is Divine, bespeaking an omniscient and omnipotent Author, rehearsing His power, and proclaiming His glory.”

“The course of nature has been called ‘the Art of God’; the course of history is His highest art, as much loftier than nature as spirit is better than matter, and as spiritual are superior to physical ends. Such is human history in its real and sacred aspects, thus first unfolded, in record, promise, and prophecy in the Word of God. All pagan literature has nothing, in grandeur and completeness, to be compared to this vision, this sublime conception of the human race, as one in origin, one in destiny, the theatre of the divine work of redemption.

“Augustine, the greatest teacher of the Latin Church, first felt to its full extent the grandeur of this idea, which he set forth as his plan of history in his *City of God*, an immortal work composed in reply to the heathen taunt that Christianity had ruined the earth, amid the downfall of the old Roman Empire, and in the beginning of the new Latin civilisation. He

daringly proclaims that the City of God, the home of the elect, is to subdue Rome and the earth; that the prophecies of Scripture foretell the fall of both the ancient and the modern Babylon. Bossuet, limited by his Roman Catholic prejudices, took up the same theme. It was expanded to still fuller proportions in Jonathan Edwards’s *History of the Work of Redemption*, written in the beginning of our new American civilisation, and sketching with masterly outline, though imperfect in historic details, the whole of human history as a divine theodicy, a real body of Divinity, which is from, for, and to God, centring in the person of Christ and the work of Redemption.”

Viewed as “the history of Redemption,” the history of the world, according to Edwards, consists of three sections connected with—

1. The antecedents of Redemption.
2. The accomplishment of Redemption.
3. The application of Redemption.

The central fact in human history is that “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; for He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. v. 19, 21).

All beside in history is subservient to this great act. The “works of God in the world during the whole space of time from the Fall to the Incarnation were all preparatory” to this. The separation of a

particular nation from the rest of the world to receive the law, the types, and the promises, that from them the Gospel might shine forth to the rest of the world, constituted *the religious preparation* for the Advent of Christ; the Greek language and literature contributed *the intellectual preparation*; while Roman conquests and laws afforded *the political preparation* for that great event, and for the kingdom of God as founded by Christ. The insufficiency of human righteousness was demonstrated in the history of the Jews, and the insufficiency of human wisdom in that of the Greeks.

The dispersion of the Jews, and the unification of the Gentiles, prepared the way for the world-wide proclamation of the Gospel. When "the fulness of time had come," our Lord appeared, being born under Augustus Cæsar, the first Emperor of the Romans. Having accomplished by His life, ministry, death, and resurrection, His great redeeming work, Christ was exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, "to give repentance and the remission of sins."

There followed, and has continued from age to age, *the Application of Redemption*. The inaugural work in this application was the outpouring of the Divine Spirit on the day of Pentecost, effecting the conversion of thousands of Jews, followed by the outpouring of the same renewing Spirit upon the Gentiles. The world-wide proclamation of the Gospel in apostolic times, and the planting of the Christian Church, were

succeeded by the destruction of Jerusalem with its Temple, the dispersion of the Jews, and the overthrow of Paganism in the Roman Empire; and then by the overthrow of the Empire itself both in the West and in the East. Seven centuries had been occupied by the rise of the Roman Empire, and fourteen centuries were occupied by its long decline and fall. The overthrow of the Empire of Eastern Rome in the fifteenth century was followed by the glorious Reformation of the sixteenth, and that again by the Puritan movement of the seventeenth century, the colonisation of the new world of America, and the widespread revival of religion in the eighteenth century—a revival which Edwards witnessed, and of which he has left interesting memorials; a revival which he looked upon as the dawn of the millennial kingdom of Christ.

Had Edwards lived to witness the widespread evangelisation of the world by modern missions, and the signal outpouring of God's judgements on papal Rome in the French Revolution, he would have added a further chapter to his valuable history of redemption. It falls to us to complete the historic outline, and to anticipate by the aid of prophecy the events which shall bring about the full and final establishment of the kingdom of God. From our study of redemption history we now advance to that of Redemption Chronology.

I. CHRONOLOGY OF THE CROSS

This chronology can be traced in Old Testament types and prophecies, and in the history and prophecies contained in the New Testament.

1. *In Old Testament Types*

On the redemption of Israel from Egypt the Passover ordinance was kept by divine command (Ex. xii.), and made the first of a series of "feasts of the Lord, or holy convocations," occupying the first seven months of each year. These feasts were divided into *two groups*, connected respectively with the vernal and autumnal equinoxes. The first group included the Passover, the wave-sheaf ordinance, and Pentecost; and typified the death of Christ, His resurrection (on "the morrow after the Sabbath" following the Passover), and the advent of the Divine Spirit. The accomplishment of these three New Testament events, at the very *times* annually typified in Jewish ordinances, is one of the most remarkable features in New Testament history.

The second group of "feasts," occurring six months later at the time of the autumnal harvest, included the Feast of Trumpets, on the first day of the seventh month; the Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month; and the Feast of Tabernacles, beginning on the fifteenth day of the month, and continuing for eight days. These feasts clearly typify still future events connected with the call and national repen-

tance of Israel, and the ingathering of all nations into the kingdom of God. While the first group of these typical Mosaic ordinances centres in the Cross of Christ, the second group centres in the advent of His kingdom.

2. *In Old Testament Prophecies*

The great subject of prophecy was twofold, as embracing "the sufferings of Christ, and the glories which should follow" (1 Pet. i.). This fact is especially prominent in the prophecies of Daniel, which consist of two distinct groups, those relating to the Cross (chap. ix.) and those relating to the Kingdom of the Son of Man (chaps. ii, vii.). Two leading periods occur in the prophecies connected with these poles of history, "70 weeks," and "7 times." The first of these extends to the *cutting off of Messiah "in the midst" of the last week of years in the seventy*; while the second period reaches to the *overthrow of the fourth kingdom* of history and prophecy, and the advent of the Kingdom of Christ in its manifest and universal form.

3. *In Christian History*

The first and second Advents of Christ are connected with a twofold order of times; first, the *times* connected with the incarnation and death of Christ; and secondly, those connected with the fourth prophetic kingdom.

DATE OF THE CRUCIFIXION

(i.) *According to the Latin Fathers the crucifixion of Christ took place in the year of the Consulship of the two Gemini, A.D. 29.*

The year A.D. 29 was that of the crucifixion of Christ according to the testimony of the Latin Fathers. Lactantius, Augustine, Sulpicius, Origen, Jerome, and Tertullian all assign the crucifixion to that year, the year of the Consulship of the two Gemini, U.C. 782, or A.D. 29.

Tertullian: "Quæ passio perfecta est sub Tiberio Cæsare, coss. Rubellio Gemino et Fuvio Gemino" (*Adv. Jud.* c. 8).

Lactantius: "Dominus noster Jesus Christus a Judæis cruciatus est . . . duobus Gemini Coss" (*De Mort. Pers.* c. 2).

Sulpicius Severus: "Dominus crucifixus est Fuvio Gemino et Rubellio Gemino Coss" (*Hist. Sac.* ii. 40).

Augustine: "Mortuus est Christus duobus Gemini Coss" (*De Civ. Dei*, xviii.).

"Nowhere in the first five centuries," says Ideler (ii. 415), "do we find any other Consular date of the death of Christ than the year of the two Gemini, except in the Greek writer Epiphanius."

(ii.) *The day in the year A.D. 29 on which the 14th of Nisan, or day of the full moon of Nisan, coincided with Friday was March 18.*

This date is confirmed by the chronology of the "70 weeks."

According to the prophecies in Dan. ix., the point from which the "70 weeks," or 490 years, were to be reckoned was the going forth of a decree to restore and build Jerusalem following the Babylonish Captivity. *Two such decrees* were given by the Persian monarch Artaxerxes, the first in the seventh, and the second in the twentieth year of his reign. With the first was connected the Mission of Ezra, and with the second that of Nehemiah. The date of the seventh and twentieth years of Artaxerxes are determined with certainty by the Astronomical Canon of Ptolemy as B.C. 457 and 444. Reckoning from the first, 485 years extended to A.D. 29, a period of 6000 months, corresponding with the 600 months in the analogous Jubilee Cycle, terminating in the Day of Atonement, with its trumpet of liberation and restoring action (Lev. xxv.).

Reckoning from the second date, B.C. 444, 69½ "weeks of years" in *lunar* form extended with great accuracy to the month of Passover in A.D. 29.

(iii.) *A.D. 29 as the year of the crucifixion is further confirmed by the interval which extended from the week of our Lord's Passion to the destruction of the Jewish Temple in A.D. 70.*

From Palm Sunday, March 13th, A.D. 29 to August 4th, A.D. 70, the day of the burning of the Temple (the 10th of Ab.) there elapsed 15,120 days; or 42

prophetic years. This period is analogous with the 15,120 months in the prophetic period of 1260 lunar years, the proportion between them being 1 d. : 1 mo.

On Palm Sunday Christ entered the Temple and cast out the money-changers, saying, "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." On the Jewish Sabbath (August 4), 42 prophetic years later, the Temple was destroyed.

II. CHRONOLOGY OF THE KINGDOM, OR REVEALED TIMES CONNECTED WITH THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

As this subject is supposed by many to be wrapped in impenetrable mystery, we will endeavour to set forth some plain statements concerning it derived from divine revelation. We advance, then, three clear and simple propositions.

(i.) *The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and especially the prophetic writings of Daniel and St. John, and the still clearer teachings of Christ, foretell the advent and describe the character of the kingdom of God.*

We need only point to the second and seventh chapters of Daniel, in which "the kingdom of the God of heaven" is plainly predicted as contrasted with existing earthly governments, and destined to fill the earth and endure for ever. The plain and

parabolic teachings of our Lord as to the kingdom of God in its present and future stages enlarge and exalt the view thus presented; while the predictions of the Apocalypse trace the story of the growth and progress of the kingdom of God to its ultimate perfection in the new heavens and earth, in which sin, suffering, and death shall be no more.

(ii.) *The prophecies of Daniel and St. John, which are intimately related both in subject and style, declare that the kingdom of God, which they represent as the kingdom of the Son of Man and of the saints of the Most High, is preceded by the reign of four universal kingdoms which they interpret as those of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.*

This is seen in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar concerning the quadripartite image, and its destruction by a stone cut out without hands, which thereupon grows to a mountain and fills the earth.

In Daniel's interpretation, the golden, silver, brazen, and iron parts of this image represent the succession of four universal kingdoms, beginning with that of Babylon. In the fifth chapter of Daniel there is an account of the overthrow of the kingdom of Babylon by the Medes and Persians; while in chapter viii. the overthrow of the Medo-Persian kingdom by the Greeks is plainly foretold. As a matter of fact the Grecian kingdom was succeeded by that of the Romans, whose kingdom, the fourth of the series, is connected in the prophecies of John with the

seven-hilled city of Rome which then, and for ages after, bore rule over all the earth.

On the destruction of this kingdom, which is represented in Daniel and Revelation as a debased and cruel wild beast power, the kingdom of this world becomes "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ," who reigns for ever and ever.

(iii.) *Both Daniel and St. John reveal the times by which the duration of these four Gentile kingdoms are limited.*

This Daniel does in two different ways: first, by the significant type of Nebuchadnezzar's abasement to a bestial state, corresponding with the wild beast character of Gentile rule, an abasement lasting "seven times"—he indicates that "seven times" in some form would measure the duration of the four wild beast kingdoms; and secondly, by definitely limiting the duration of the fourth kingdom under its blasphemous and persecuting head to "three and a half times," or one-half the "seven times" occupied by the wild beast powers. This period of three and a half times is further set forth in Daniel and the Apocalypse as "42 months," or 1260 days, *which period, interpreted on the year-day scale employed in the Law and the Prophets, is 1260 years.*

The employment of a *day* as the symbol of a *year* is seen in Num. xiv. 33, 34. "Your children," said Moses, "shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be

wasted in the wilderness. *After the number of the days* in which ye searched the land, even forty days, *each day for a year*, shall ye bear your iniquities, and ye shall know my breach of promise."

It is also seen in Ezek. iv. 4-6: "Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: *I have appointed thee each day for a year.*"

In the absence of any authoritative interpretation of the prophetic "days" in Daniel and the Apocalypse, it is natural to interpret them *on the same scale* as that employed by Moses and Ezekiel acting under divine direction; but *the fulfilment* of the "70 weeks" of Daniel's great prophecy as to the time of the "cutting off" of Messiah, *on the year-day scale*, demonstrates the use of that scale by the prophet himself. The method thus employed of representing a year by a day rests on a plain analogy of natural times; and is eminently suited for the uses of symbolical prophecy intended to conceal for a time the meaning of the periods in question, and only gradually to reveal that meaning when its comprehension was needed, by the fulfilment of the prophecy itself. The importance of

the period of "1260 days" or years may be gathered from the frequency of its occurrence in Daniel and the Apocalypse, where it is found in three different forms, as three and a half times, as 42 months, and as 1260 days, no less than seven times; and with two brief additions of 30 and 45 years, twice more—nine times in all.

On comparing these periods with *the known chronology* of the four kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, reckoned from the era of their rise to the present day, we observe first the broad fact that these four kingdoms have actually lasted 2520 years; and further that at the bisection of this period the apostate powers of Mohammedanism and the Papacy arose, whose duration has lasted 1260 years. We further observe that *the duration of the four kingdoms, from the Babylonian Era of Nabonassar B.C. 747 (the starting-point in Ptolemy's Canon of these four kingdoms) to the fall of the Western Empire of Rome in A.D. 476, was exactly 1260 lunar years*; a fact I discovered thirty years ago, and made the basis of a calendar of the four kingdoms, in my work on *The Approaching End of the Age*. I further discovered that the 75 years (30+45) which prophecy adds in the last chapter of Daniel to 1260 years, and thus to the whole period of 2520 years, is the difference between 2520 lunar and 2520 solar years; a fact confirming in the most striking way the year-day interpretation of these times.

Regard these periods as days, the addition of

75 days to them has no meaning; regard them as years, then the 75 years are seen to be *an integral part of the times in question*, a period produced in the lapse of 2520 years by the difference between the length of the solar year and the lunar; for in 2520 years the 10 days 21 hours by which the solar year exceeds the lunar year of twelve months, accumulates to 75 solar years, and this not by a rough approximation, but with remarkable accuracy.

III. SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE FOUR EMPIRES

Astronomical Canon of Ptolemy

The uncertainty which attaches to remote periods of secular chronology disappears at the date of the accession of Nabonassar, with whose reign the time of the four Gentile Empires commences. From this time forward we are able to *verify the chronological records of the past*; as the dates of ancient history are confirmed by astronomic observations. The astronomical records of the ancients, by means of which we are able to fix with certainty the chronology of the earlier centuries of the "Times of the Gentiles," are contained in the *Syntaxis* or *Almagest* of Ptolemy.

In the existence of this invaluable work, and in its preservation as a precious remnant of antiquity, the hand of Providence can clearly be traced. The same divine care which raised up Herodotus and other

Greek historians to carry on the records of the past from the point to which they had been brought by the writings of the prophets at the close of the Babylonish Captivity;—the Providence which raised up Josephus, the Jewish historian, at the termination of New Testament history to record the fulfilment of prophecy in the destruction of Jerusalem, raised up also Ptolemy in the important interval which extended from Titus to Hadrian, that of the completion of Jewish desolation, *to record the chronology of the nine previous centuries*, and to associate it in such a way with the revolutions of the solar system as to permit of the most searching demonstration of its truth.

Ptolemy's great work, the *Almagest*, is a treatise on astronomy, setting forth the researches of ancient observers and mathematicians with reference to the position of the stars, the exact length of the year, and the elements of the orbits of the sun, moon, and planets. This work was written in Greek, and subsequently translated into Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, and Latin, etc.; it became the text-book of astronomic knowledge both in the East and in Europe, and retained that high position for about fourteen centuries, or till the time of Copernicus, the birth of modern astronomy, three centuries ago. The chronological value of the *Almagest* is owing to the fact that it interweaves a series of ancient dates with a series of celestial positions. It contains a complete catalogue of the succession of Babylonian, Persian,

Grecian, and Roman monarchs, together with the dates of their accession and the duration of their reigns. Its astronomic events are referred to definite historic dates, and by this connection there is conferred on the latter the character of scientific certainty.

This important feature of the *Almagest* is described as follows in the *Chrono-Astrolabe*, by James B. Lindsay, a work published in 1858, demonstrating the authenticity of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman chronology, etc. by astronomic methods: "The Syntaxis of Ptolemy contains an account of many *historic* events, and blended with them is a multitude of astronomic observations. The *astronomic* and *historic* cannot be separated, and they must both stand or fall together. *The astronomic can be rigidly verified, and the truth of the history is a legitimate deduction.*"¹

The astronomical observations in the *Almagest* are stated in days, months, and years, reckoned from the Era of Nabonassar, Thoth I., Nabonassar I.,—or the noon of Feb. 26, B.C. 747. As these observations are numerous and accurate, the Era of Nabonassar is a firmly established date.

In a table at the close of this work the astronomical observations which are gathered from various parts of the *Almagest* are arranged in chronological order; the first three columns in the table indicating the century, year, month, and day of the astronomical event, *as reckoned from the Era of Nabonassar*.

¹ Author's work, *Creation centred in Christ*, vol. i. pp. 292-93.

THE CANON OF PTOLEMY

CANON OF THE KINGS OF THE ASSYRIANS AND MEDES

		Each.	Sum.
1	Nabonassar	14	14
2	Nadius	2	16
3	Khozirus and Porus	5	21
4	Jougaius	5	26
5	Mardocempadus	12	38
6	Archianus	5	43
7	First Interregnum	2	45
8	Belibus	3	48
9	Apronadius	6	54
10	Regibelus	1	55
11	Mesimordachus	4	59
12	Second Interregnum	8	67
13	Asaridinus	13	80
14	Saosduchinus	20	100
15	Khuniladanus	22	122
16	Nabopolassar	21	143
17	Nabokolassar	43	186
18	Ilvarodamus	2	188
19	Nerikassolassar	4	192
20	Nabonadius	17	209

PERSIAN KINGS

		Each.	Sum.
21	Cyrus	9	218
22	Cambyses	8	226
23	Darius I.	36	262
24	Xerxes	21	283
25	Artaxerxes I.	41	324
26	Darius II.	19	343
27	Artaxerxes II.	46	389
28	Ochus	21	410
29	Arogus	2	412
30	Darius III.	4	416
31	Alexander of Macedon	8	424

YEARS OF THE KINGS AFTER THE DEATH OF
KING ALEXANDER

		Each.	Sum.
1	Philip, after Alexander the Founder	7	7
2	Alexand. Ægus	12	19

KINGS OF THE GREEKS IN EGYPT

		Each.	Sum.
3	Ptolemy Lagus	20	39
4	" Philadelphus	38	77
5	" Euergetes I.	25	102
6	" Philopator	17	119
7	" Epiphanes	24	143
8	" Philometor	35	178
9	" Euergetes II.	29	207
10	" Soter	36	243
11	" Dionysius	29	272
12	Cleopatra	22	294

KINGS OF THE ROMANS

		Each.	Sum.
13	Augustus	43	337
14	Tiberius	22	359
15	Caius	4	363
16	Claudius	14	377
17	Nero	14	391
18	Vespasian	10	401
19	Titus	3	404
20	Domitian	15	419
21	Nerva	1	420
22	Trajan	19	439
23	Hadrian	21	460
24	Antoninus	23	483

COMPLETION OF THE CANON OF PTOLEMY

A.D.		A.D.	
161	Marcus Aurelius.	268	Claudius.
180	Commodus.	270	Quintillus.
193	Pertinax.	270	Aurelian.
193	Didius Julianus.	275	Tacitus.
193	Septimus Severus.	276	Florianus.
211	Caracalla.	276	Probus.
217	Macrinus.	282	Carus.
218	Elagabalus.	282	Carinus.
222	Alexander Severus.	282	Numerianus.
235	Maximin.	284	Diocletian.
238	The Gordians.	286	Maximinian.
238	Maximus and Balbinus.	305	Constantius Chlorus.
238	Gordian III.	306	Constantine the Great.
244	Philip the Arabian.	337	Constantine II.
249	Decius.	337	Constans.
251	Gallus.	337	Constantius.
254	Æmilianus.	361	Julian.
254	Valerian.	363	Jovian.
260	Gallienus.	364	Valentinian.

FINAL DIVISION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EMPIRES

A.D.		A.D.	
375	Gratian.	461	Severus.
375	Valentinian II.	467	Anthemius.
395	Honorius.	472	Olybrius.
425	Valentinian III.	474	Julius Nepos.
455	Maximus.	475	Romulus Augustulus.
456	Avitus.	476	Deposed, Aug. 22.
457	Majorianus.		

End of Western Roman Empire. From the Era of Nabonassar, Feb. 26, B.C. 747, to the fall of Augustulus, Aug. 22, A.D. 476, there elapsed $1222\frac{1}{2}$ solar years, or *twelve hundred and sixty lunar years.*

Think of the long complex wonderful story that terminated at the fall of the Western Roman Empire in A.D. 476; think of the magnitude, variety, and multiplicity of the events constituting the rise, course, duration, and fall of these four universal Empires; think of the careers of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, of Cyrus and Darius, of Xerxes and Alexander the Great, of the Maccabees and the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies, of Pompey and Julius and Augustus—above all, of the sublime and ever memorable events of the career of “Messiah the Prince”; think of the Herods and of Pilate, of Titus and of Hadrian, and of the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Jewish nation; think of the long line of the Cæsars, their conquests and their crimes, their glories and their shames, their world-wide dominion and unparalleled power; think of the pagan persecutions of the early Church, and of the first division of the noble army of martyrs; think of the conversion of Constantine, and the establishment of Christianity in the Roman world; think of the division of the Empire, and of the removal of the seat of government to Constantinople; think of the dreadful inroads of Northern barbarism, and of the long-continued decline of the old Roman civilisation; let the mind run slowly over the events of these twelve or thirteen centuries of human history; let the magnificence and the might of Nineveh, Babylon, Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, Constantinople, and a hundred other great cities pass like a panorama before the mental eye, and

melt away like dissolving views into the contrasted spectacle of their wreck and ruin, their struggles and sufferings, in siege and sack and overthrow; let the myriad episodes of their history recorded by the Jewish prophets and Josephus, by Herodotus and Thucydides, by Eusebius and Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall*, be recalled: and then let us measure if we can the marvel of omniscience and foreknowledge that is involved in the fact that, not only the occurrence, the order, and the sequence of this almost interminable series of events was foreseen in detail, and foretold in outline from the beginning, but that *the time required for their conjoint occurrence was appointed and arranged even to a day!* The entire history of the four great Empires up to the point of the fall of the fourth in its first or Empire form (as distinguished from the last or ten kingdom phase) occupied precisely "time, times and a half," or 1260 years on the lunar scale.¹

Second Period of 1260 lunar years, from the end of the Western Empire of Rome, Aug. 22, A.D. 476, to the Peace of Carlowitz, Jan. 26, 1699

The Ottoman dynasty dates from the Turkish invasion of Europe at the opening of the fourteenth

¹ "The interval from the Era of Nabonassar, Feb. 26, B.C. 747, to Aug. 22, A.D. 476 (date of the deposition of Augustulus) was 15,120 lunations and 11 days. 15,120 lunations, or 1260 lunar years, are 446,502½ days, and equal 1222 tropical years and six lunar months within half a day, as stated in the *Approaching End of the Age*, and *Light for the Last Days*; but the interval to Aug. 22 exceeds this by 11 days; an unimportant fractional difference in so vast an adjustment."—Author's work, *Light for the Last Days*.

century. Under Mahomet II., "one of the most detestable man-slayers recorded in history," the Ottomans were organised for effective conquest. Wallachia, Bosnia, Karamania, the Crimea, Rhodes, Cyprus, Egypt, and Hungary were successively conquered by the Turks, against whom the Crusades launched in vain their enormous armies.

The Eastern Empire of Rome was overthrown by the Turks in 1453, and Constantinople became the capital of the Mohammedan Empire. At the close of about four hundred years from the date of the Turkish invasion of Europe, their disastrous defeat in the attempt to capture Vienna marked *the initial date of their downfall*. Under the "Holy Alliance," a league of the Emperor of Austria, the King of Poland, and the Republic of Vienna, a successful war was waged against the common foe. Prince Eugene of Savoy was placed by the Emperor at the head of the Austrian army, and a series of victories over the Turks concluded by the *Peace of Carlowitz*, in 1699. With the loss at that time of Hungary, Transylvania, the Morea, Dalmatia, Podolia, the Ukraine, and Azof, the Ottomans ceased to be the terror of Christendom.

In the year 1878 I made the discovery that the interval from the Nabonassar Era, Feb. 26, B.C. 747, to the fall of the Western Empire of Rome, Aug. 22, 476, was, to a month, 1260 lunar years. Thirty years later, in the present year, 1908, I have made the analogous discovery *that the interval from the Nabon-*

assar Era to the Peace of Carlowitz was, to a day, twice 1260 lunar years, or the full period of 2520 lunar years. The accuracy of the period is truly remarkable, and is clearly shown by the Astronomical Tables which I published in 1896.

The Nabonassar Era, Feb. 26, B.C. 747, fell on the sixth day of the new moon, and the Peace of Carlowitz, on Jan. 26, 1699, also occurred on the sixth day of the new moon, indicating the fact that the interval between the two dates was measured by complete lunar months. The number of lunar months from date to date is $12 \times 2520 = 30,240$ months, or 2520 lunar years; the full period of "Seven Times" in lunar years.¹

It is a noteworthy fact that this date *had long been foreseen by prophetic interpreters as that of the termination of the Woe of the Sixth Trumpet*. "It was foretold," says the astronomer and historian Whiston, Sir Isaac Newton's successor, in his commentary on the Apocalypse, "by Mr. Brightman about a century ere the time came, and by Dr. Cressener some years before, and both from the same prophecy; and all came to pass accordingly."

I now point out the interesting fact that *the foretold 1260 years of the prophesying of the "Witnesses" which terminated with the revocation of the Edict of*

¹ 2520 lunar years are 893,005 days, and 2445 Julian years 893,036 days; difference, 31 days; hence as Feb. 26, B.C. 747 to Feb. 26, A.D. 1699 (O.S.) = 2445 Julian years; subtract 31 days = Jan. 26, 1699 = 2520 lunar years.

Nantes in 1685, the closing crisis of papal persecution in the crushing of the Protestant Church throughout the whole of France, and the miserable exile of the Huguenots—*began with the writing and publication of Augustine's famous work on "The City of God," in 425 and 426, following the burning of Rome by the Goths in the year 410. That the publication of this work marked the commencement of a new Era, which may be described as that of the rise of the Protestant Church, is a fact of the deepest interest.*

Principal Cunningham, Professor of Church History in Edinburgh, in his valuable work on *Historical Theology*, says: "Augustine has had the peculiar honour assigned to him by the great Head of the Church of having been the first to develop, in a systematic order, and in their right connection with each other, the great doctrine taught in the Word of God concerning man's lost and ruined condition by nature; the gracious agency of God in the conversion and sanctification of sinners; and the true cause or source of all the effects thus produced, wherever they are produced, in His own Sovereign good pleasure and eternal purpose—having mercy on whom He would have mercy, and having compassion on whom He would have compassion; and he was thus enabled to render most important services to the cause of truth and righteousness in all succeeding generations. There is indeed much reason to believe that no inconsiderable portion of the piety that existed in the Church from the time when he flourished till the

Reformation—a period of above one thousand years—was instrumentally connected, more or less directly, with his influence and writings. We may apply the same statement to almost everything like piety that has ever been found in connection with the Church of Rome, including what is certainly to the eye of a Christian by far the brightest spot in the history of that apostate communion—viz., the Port Royalists, and the other Jansenists of France in the seventeenth century.”¹

The 1260 Years of the Prophesying of the Witnesses

“Before the conclusion of the fifth century,” says Hallam, “the mighty fabric of Empire which valour and policy had founded upon the seven hills of Rome, was finally overthrown, in all the West of Europe, by the barbarous nations from the North, whose martial energy and whose numbers were irresistible.”² The burning of Rome by the Goths in A.D. 410 led to the writing of what some have regarded as Augustine’s greatest work, *De Civitate Dei*, “On the City of God.” Commenced in A.D. 413, this work was finished in A.D. 426. In it Augustine, moved by the symbolic language of the Apocalypse, compares the kingdom of Rome to that of Babylon, and the kingdom of God to Jerusalem. With the proud, corrupt, and cruel city of Imperial Rome, whose history he traces and whose character he delineates, he contrasts the city which

¹ Cunningham’s *Historical Theology*, vol. i. p. 331.

² *Europe in the Middle Ages*, p. 1.

God has founded, the Jerusalem of the saints or people of God, called to Christlike sufferings on earth, and destined to glory hereafter. The *carnality* of the one and the *spirituality* of the other are set forth as leading and distinctive features. The two cities stand contrasted in their rise, character, history, and destiny.

Little did Augustine imagine that on the seven hills of Rome was to be seated, later on, the Harlot Church, “Babylon the Great,” drunken with “the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus”; that the successors of the martyrs under Pagan Rome would be the still more numerous martyrs under Papal Rome—martyrs of the Protestant Church of Reformation and pre-Reformation times. Yet so it came to pass. The writings of Augustine *co-temporise with the rise of this great body of Protestant Witnesses, and give expression to their Evangelical faith*. At this point in history began the propagation of a Gospel purer and more Pauline than that of the Church at the time of its establishment by Constantine.

“The first impulse,” says Neander, “towards the regeneration” (of the Protestant Reformation) “proceeded from the same countries which sent forth also the most important missions—those islands at the West which were so well adapted by their situation to furnish quiet and secluded seats for seminaries of Christian instruction and culture, and to serve the great purpose of dispersing abroad spiritual blessings as well as other benefits to mankind—the islands of

Great Britain and Ireland were the spots where, in retired monasteries, those men obtained their training, who were destined to be teachers and educators of the rude nations." There followed what Neander calls *The New Creation of Christianity*, and with the missionaries of Great Britain and Ireland he associates the Germanic tribes they evangelised, "who planted themselves on the ruins of the Roman Empire which they had destroyed, and formed in the West *the new theatre of an historical development which was to shape the destinies of the world.*"

Augustine's work on *The City of God* was completed in A.D. 426. St. Patrick commenced his missionary labours in Ireland in A.D. 432. From Ireland went forth St. Columba to found the missionary monastery of Iona, and evangelise for thirty-four years the heathen Pictic tribes of Scotland. Lindisfarne in the north of England was an offshoot from Iona, and was founded by Aidan, the apostle of Northumbria, who, with Finan, Colman, and other missionaries evangelised the greater part of the Saxon Heptarchy.

From Iona and Lindisfarne missionaries went forth in great numbers to France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. Willebrord, educated in Ireland, evangelised Batavia, Friesland, and Westphalia; Willehad, from Northumberland, laboured in Germany; Gallus founded St. Gall in Switzerland; Virgilius, an Irish bishop, the Church of Salzburg; Cyllena (Cilian), an Irish monk, laboured among the Franks; Fridolin, likewise from Ireland, among the people in

Alsace, Switzerland, and Swabia; and Livin, "descended from an Irish family, laboured among the barbarous people in Brabant, and experienced the martyrdom which he had predicted for himself." Columban, born in the Irish province of Leinster, and educated in the famous monastery of Bangor, accompanied by twelve other missionaries, founded monasteries for Christian teaching in Anegrey, Luxeuil, and Fontenay in France. "May Gaul embrace us all at once," he said, "as the Kingdom of Heaven will embrace us if we be found worthy of it." He subsequently laboured in Zurich, and eventually founded the monastery of Bobbio, near Pavia, in Italy.

The time would fail us to describe the witness against Romish errors borne by Claude of Turin in the ninth century, and by the Albigenses and Waldenses in later times. The Protestant Confession of the Faith of the Waldenses, entitled *The Noble Lesson*, bears the date 1100. "Two hundred and fifty years before Wycliffe stood forth as the champion of Protestant truth; three hundred years before Huss and Jerome confronted the Council of Constance; four hundred years before Luther published his ninety-five theses in Wittenberg, the Waldenses wrote their *Treatise on Antichrist*, a copy of which is contained in Leger's folio volume, dated A.D. 1120."¹

The Waldenses, the Israel of the Alps, were persecuted during six centuries by the Church of Rome,

¹ Author's work, *History Unveiling Prophecy*, p. 90.

almost to utter annihilation. The story of Wycliffe and the Lollards in England, of Huss and the Hussites in Prague and Bohemia, is well known, and is linked with that of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, by whom the witness of the Hussite martyrs was revived; to be followed by that of the Huguenots, the Puritans, the Pilgrim Fathers, and the Protestant Witnesses in the time of Charles II. and James II., up to the date of the English Revolution under William of Orange in 1688.

Only at the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, a peace between Great Britain, the United Provinces, France, and Spain, ending the sanguinary conflicts of the Revolution, did there take place the full establishment in England of civil and religious liberty. Twelve hundred and sixty years of Protestant history may then be said to have extended between the publication of Augustine's *City of God*, and the contemporaneous commencement of the Evangelical missions of the early Middle Ages, and the cruel revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. in 1685. With the English Revolution which followed three and a half years later, in 1688-89, *a new Era opened* of Protestant growth, prosperity, and world-wide dominion. These facts should be read in the light of prophecy, especially the prophecy relating to the Christian Witnesses in Rev. xi., so clearly expounded and boldly applied by the Reformers and Puritans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

TERMINAL ERA OF RETRIBUTION

To the two foregoing periods, each measuring 1260 lunar years, there has now to be added *a third and closing period*, indicated both by prophecy and history. The Jewish Captivity was accomplished by a series of Assyrian and Babylonish invasions which culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple by Nebuchadnezzar in B.C. 587. From this date, 2520 solar years extend to the yet future year, A.D. 1934. From the Peace of Carlowitz in 1699 to the year 1934 the interval is 235 years, a period which *remarkably corresponds* with the 235 years which extended from the *typical cleansing of the Sanctuary* by Judas Maccabeus after the plunder of Jerusalem and dedication of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes to Jupiter Olympias, B.C. 165 (commemorated by the Feast of Dedication), to the Roman capture and destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

B.C. 165-A.D. 70, . . . 235 years.

A.D. 1699-1934, . . . 235 years.

While this period extends to a date in the future which promises to be of importance in connection with the full restoration of the *Jewish people*, forming the theme of so large an amount of prophecy, the addition of 75 years in the last chapter of Daniel to 1260, making 1335 years, suggests the probable addition of 75 years to the 1260 years of *Papal Domination* which terminated at the fall of the Papal Temporal Power in 1870. This addition of 75 years

extends the fulfilment of the prophetic times to the year 1945.

To the closing period of the existence of the four great Gentile Empires thus indicated, the character of *Retribution* is plainly attached. Introduced by the outbreak of infidelity in France in the eighteenth century which was the immediate predecessor of the Revolution, this period has witnessed a spectacle of divine judgement without a parallel in human history.

"Terrible as was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, even it sinks into a secondary place when compared with the wholesale slaughter by massacre and war which accompanied this fearful modern judgement, affecting not only the whole of France but all the surrounding nations of Europe.

"In letters of flame across the movement is written the word *Retribution*.

"France—the France of St. Bartholomew, of the wars of the Huguenots, of the siege of La Rochelle, of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, of the suppression of the Jansenists, of the destruction of Port Royal; the France which had cast out with sublime folly and inhuman cruelty the Gospel and the saints of God—was visited with a plague of infidelity and criminality, like an ulcerous sore, covering the nation from head to foot. The proud and tyrannical monarchy which had persecuted and banished the Huguenots was overthrown and abolished in a national convulsion of revolutionary crime and excess in which all restraints of law and order, human and divine, were

relaxed and dissolved: government delivered into the hands of sanguinary wretches; monarchy brought to the scaffold; aristocracy abolished; estates confiscated or plundered; the nobles slain or exiled; youth, talent, beauty, ruthlessly sacrificed; prisons glutted with victims; rivers choked with corpses; churches desecrated; priests slaughtered; religion suppressed; an infidel calendar substituted for the week with its Sabbath; and the worship of a harlot as the goddess of Reason for the worship of the host on the altars of the Church of Rome. In France was beheld the reign of infidelity, anarchy, and the guillotine; while from France were communicated to surrounding Europe the fires of Revolution, and an anti-ecclesiastical mania that has never since been allayed.

"Nor was this all, for democratic revolution was succeeded by *military despotism*; the horrors of massacre by the horrors of war. All Europe was involved in the far-reaching conflagration. Italy, Austria, Germany, Poland, Spain, Portugal, and Russia were one after another invaded by the blood-thirsty armies of France, led by a resistless conqueror, eclipsing in his military powers the Alexanders and Cæsars of antiquity. The Catholic nations which had warred for centuries against the Reformed Faith were successively crushed under the feet of this ruthless despot; thrones overturned, crowns trampled in the dust, armies scattered; cities pillaged; provinces wasted with war and reduced to desolation.

And then the guilty powers which had wrought the widespread havoc were arrested and destroyed. All the revolutionary leaders in France came to miserable ends. The nations of Europe combined against the military despot who sought to become the master of the world; the powers of nature fought against him; the sands of the Syrian desert, the snows of Russia, the waves of the ocean rose up to arrest his progress; his armies scattered, his fleets destroyed, he was compelled to abdicate, and, chained like an eagle to a rock in mid-ocean, was left to contemplate the ruin of all that he had planned and wrought, and the triumph of the powers he had once defeated and despised.

"The Lord is known by the judgement which He executeth; the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands."¹

Fall of the Papal Power in 1870

On the 18th of July 1870, at the Ecumenical Council held in Rome, the Infallibility of the Pope was decreed and promulgated. The dogma was read by candlelight amid the rolling thunders of a storm which had burst over Rome. "*The definitions of the Roman Pontiff are of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church, irreformable. But if any one presume to contradict this our definition, let him be anathema.*" The reader ceased. The storm alone was speaking. For a moment no

¹ Author's work, *History Unveiling Prophecy*, pp. 226-29.

human tone disturbed the air. "But memory was repeating *two terrific words*, and imagination kept saying that the winds were whispering, 'Irreformable! Anathema!'"

Speedily was the blasphemy of this infallibility decree rebuked by the Most High! On the same day that it was published there was despatched from Paris to Berlin the declaration of war which sealed the fate of the second French Empire, and with it that of the temporal power of the Papacy. Before the end of the year France lay bleeding and prostrate at the feet of Germany, without an army in the field, or an ally in Europe. On 8th September the King of Italy forewarned the Pope of his intention to occupy Rome, and did so in the following month. Rome decided by an overwhelming vote for union with Italy, and was with its surrounding territories incorporated by royal decree with the Italian kingdom in October 1870.

"Can any one suppose that these things happened by accident? Consider what a combination is here! Far back at the beginning of the dark ages, a wicked usurper and murderer, thinking perhaps to atone for his crimes, presumed to bestow a prerogative which pertains to Christ alone—the headship of all the Churches East and West—on the bishop of the ancient seat of Empire, Rome; and the ambitious and worldly minded bishop dares to accept the gift, and seat himself in the Temple of God, as if he were a God. Divine prophecy had foretold more

than a thousand years before, the uprising of this power at this period, and had foretold also that it should endure in the Roman world for 1260 years.

"We pass on through the centuries, and note how this same power grows greater and greater, till it wields an authority mightier than that of the Cæsars at the pinnacle of their glory, for it rules over two hundred millions of mankind, and according to its own account rules not in earth only, but in heaven and in hell. We note how the saints are 'given into its hand,' and perish by millions at its instigation. We note how all the monarchs of the Roman world give it their voluntary submission for centuries, and how at last they rebel against it, and seek to overthrow it; how they succeed in doing this time after time, though not fully or finally, till when eleven centuries have been left behind us we see the power declining and falling. Twelve pass away; it is weaker still! Will it last out to a thirteenth? No; its duration is fixed at 1260 years. We scan its condition more closely. Fall succeeds fall; yet it rises again, or rather is helped up again. The last four years are come; it still stands trembling. The fateful year is ushered in. Its first six months pass, and there is no sign of a crash; midsummer comes, and, lo! the storm breaks, and before winter appears all is over—as a reigning dynasty in Europe it has fallen to rise no more! Is not this the finger of God?"¹

¹ Author's work, *History Unveiling Prophecy*, pp. 359, 360.

Contemporaneous Overthrow of Mohammedan Power

Popery and Mohammedanism, parallel apostasies in the West and in the East, rose together at the outset of the seventh century, have run parallel courses, have declined together, and are reaching their end in the same closing era.

"When we remember what the Mohammedan power is and has done in the world, when we remember that its sway at one time extended from the Wall of China to the Atlantic, and from the Danube to the Nile; when we remember that it well-nigh extinguished Christianity throughout the whole of northern Africa, and cruelly persecuted it in all the rest of its dominions; when we remember that one hundred and fifty millions of men are still believers in its Christ-rejecting creed, and that millions more of nominal Christians are still the victims of its oppressions and cruelties; its present and rapidly progressing *decay*, and the consequent gradual liberation of its Jewish and Christian victims, and the near prospect of its total extinction in Europe, become 'a sign of the times' gigantic in its importance, and carrying a weight which a thousand brief and passing signs could never do. Every fresh stage in its fall is a confirmatory sign, as is every fresh manifestation of the decay of papal nations, and of the increasing spread and ascendancy of the Protestant powers."¹

¹ Author's work, *Light for the Last Days*, p. 380.

The recent establishment of representative government in Turkey is a further stage in the downfall of Mohammedan supremacy in the East, and promises to have an important effect on Jewish restoration to Palestine.

Visible Commencement of the Restoration of the Jews at the close of 1260 years from the Conquest and Occupation of Palestine by the Saracens, A.D. 637

The year 1897, 1260 years from A.D. 637—the initial date of the occupation of Palestine by Mohammedan conquerors—has witnessed the rise of a Jewish movement having as its object the restoration of the national existence of the Jews in the land of their fathers. The first Zionist Congress held that year was attended by Jewish delegates assembled from the four quarters of the world. The eloquent Jew, Dr. Max Nordau, addressing the delegates at a more recent Zionist Congress, said: "It seemed as if we were witnessing a miracle which affected ourselves, and all around us. We felt ourselves part and parcel of a fairy tale, in which we saw our brethren, thousands of years buried, again become flesh and blood. We wanted in the joy of this reunion to rehearse the sad history of the hundreds of years in which we had been dead in our tombs, in a grave which lacked the peace of a grave."

"I am of the conviction," says David Baron, who attended the conference, "that if Zionism does not as

yet sufficiently represent the wealth and material resources of the Jewish nation, it does certainly represent a large proportion of its head and brain; and as I looked upon those hundreds of earnest intelligent faces, gathered from all parts of the earth, and listened to the able and often impassioned speeches made in different languages, I felt in my soul that Israel is God's great reserve force for the future blessing of the world; and my heart goes out in yearning for the time when 'the Spirit shall be poured upon us from on high,' and when these remarkable gifts, and this zeal and ability, shall be consecrated to the service of making known their long-rejected Messiah and King among the nations."

Measured from the completion of Jewish Captivity at the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 587, 1260 lunar years extended to A.D. 637, the date of the Mohammedan Conquest of Jerusalem; while from A.D. 637, 1260 lunar years extended to 1859-60, the date of the formation of the Universal Israelite Alliance; and 1260 solar years to the first Zionist Congress in 1897. These facts confirm the anticipation that the full period of "seven times," or 2520 solar years terminating in 1934, will prove of importance in relation to the complete accomplishment of Jewish restoration promised in the Word of God.

V

The Place of Christ in Nature

CONNECTION OF GEOLOGY, HISTORY, AND PROPHECY

GEOLOGY, History, and Prophecy are three chapters of one book; three sections of one map; three acts of one great drama. Geology, as far as its facts are ascertained and its inferences legitimate; History, as far as it is authentic and accurate; and Prophecy, as far as it is rightly interpreted, trace the stages of one great story. "By piecing the records together," says Hugh Miller, "that revealed in Scripture, and that revealed in the rocks—records which, however widely geologists may mistake the one, or commentators misunderstand the other, have emanated from the same great Author, we learn that in slow and solemn majesty has period succeeded period, each in succession ushering in a higher and yet higher scene of existence; that fish, reptiles, mammiferous quadrupeds, have reigned in turn; that responsible man, 'made in the image of God,' and with dominion over all creatures, ultimately entered into a world ripened for his reception; but, further, that this

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passing scene in which he forms the prominent figure is not the final one in the long series, but merely the last of the preliminary scenes; and that that period to which the bygone ages, incalculable in amount, with all their well-proportioned gradations of being, form the imposing vestibule, shall have perfection for its occupant, and eternity for its duration."¹

"Two long series of events connected with the earth and man are thus set before us in the records of Nature and Revelation; in each of the two series of events we mark the same progressive movement from lower to higher stages; the same vastness of preparation, the same loftiness of outlook, the same moral end, the same measurelessness of duration; the one series stretching through the almost interminable past, and the other through the altogether interminable future! And the two series of events thus unrolled are seen to be mutually adjusted and linked in the closest continuity. The second is the flower and fruit of the first; the glory and maturity to which its ages form only the introduction. Without the first, the second would lack foundation; without the second, the first would be a foundation destitute of superstructure. The second is the realisation of the aims and aspirations of the first."²

"As certainly" (says Hugh Miller) "as the dynasty of the fish was predetermined in the scheme of Providence to be succeeded by the higher dynasty

¹ *Footprints of the Creator*, p. 290.

² From author's work, *Creation Centred in Christ*, vol. i. p. 240.

of the reptile, and that of the reptile by the still higher dynasty of the mammal, so it was equally predetermined that the dynasty of responsible fallible man should be succeeded by the dynasty of glorified immortal man; and that in consequence the present mixed state of things is not a mere result, as some theologians believe, of a certain human act which was perpetrated about six thousand years ago, but was, virtually at least, the effect of a God-determined decree old as eternity—a decree in which that act was written as a portion of the general programme. . . . The present scene of things is simply one scene in a foreordained series—a scene intermediate between the age of the irresponsible mammal and of glorified man: and to provide for the upward passage to the ultimate state we know that in reference to the purpose of the Eternal, He through whom the work of restoration has been effected was in reality what He is designated in the remarkable text, 'The Lamb slain from the *foundation* of the world.' First in the course of things, man in the image of God, and next in meet sequence, God in the form of man, have been equally from all eternity predetermined actors in the same great scheme."¹

The pre-established harmony between the physical and the spiritual existing in the geological order and historical sequence, is seen also in the adjustment of Natural Times to the Times of Redemption Chronology.

¹ *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 245.

THE ASTRONOMICAL ADJUSTMENT, OR THE CONNECTION OF NATURAL TIMES WITH REVEALED

About a century and a half ago a Swiss astronomer of the name De Cheseaux made the discovery that the prophetic periods, 1260 and 2300 years, and their difference, 1040 years, are luni-solar cycles harmonising the lunar month with the solar year.

The story of that discovery is briefly narrated by Chambers in his *Handbook of Astronomy* in the following words: "About the middle of the eighteenth century the Swiss astronomer De Cheseaux—he who observed the six-tailed comet of 1744—was led to inquire whether any special significance in a scientific or chronological sense attached to the periods 1260 and 2300 years assigned in the Books of Daniel and Revelation as the duration of the Gentile Empires whose course the writer of these books foretold. De Cheseaux was not long in ascertaining that these periods are soli-lunar cycles, whilst the difference between them—1040 years—is the largest accurate soli-lunar cycle known. The data by means of which De Cheseaux arrived at this discovery will be found in a book which he published.¹ It is now exceedingly scarce, but a copy exists in the British Museum. The data in question

¹ *Memoires Posthumes de M. De Cheseaux. Remarques Historiques, Chronologiques, et Astronomiques, sur quelques Endroits du Livre de Daniel.* Lausanne, 1754.

were submitted to and examined by Mairan and Cassini, and by them pronounced sound. Mairan said, 'It was impossible to doubt the facts and discoveries the book contained, but he could not conceive *how* or *why* they had come to be embodied so distinctly in the Holy Scriptures.' Cassini pronounced the conclusions perfectly consistent with the most exact astronomy."

After further describing the nature of the cycles, Chambers says: "Such, briefly, were De Cheseaux's discoveries. To these will now be added some of Mr. Grattan Guinness's with reference to these cycles while studying the connection of Natural and Revealed Chronology." As the facts to which he refers are more or less embodied in the present chapter there is no need to quote his account of them. Since the publication of Chambers's work I have added considerably to the elucidation of the subject by the preparation of *extensive Astronomical Tables based on the Prophetic Times in the Book of Daniel* viewed as cycles of solar and lunar harmonisation. The late Professor Birks of Cambridge refers in the following striking passage to the astronomic character of the Prophetic Times:—

"In the view thus unfolded there is a simple grandeur which harmonises with all the other features of these inspired predictions. A fresh light is thrown upon the words of the Psalmist, where the same word is employed as in these mysterious dates, 'He appointed the moon for seasons.' We are raised

out of the contracted range of human reckonings to a lofty elevation of thought, and catch some glimpses of that mysterious wisdom by which the Almighty blends all the works of nature and providence into subservience to the deep counsels of His redeeming love. A divine ladder of time is set before us, and as we rise successively from step to step, days are replaced by years, and years by millennia; *and these, perhaps, hereafter in their turn by some higher unit from which the soul of man may measure out cycles still more vast*, and obtain a wider view of the immeasurable grandeur of eternity.

"When we reflect also that the celestial periods by which these cycles are determined are themselves fixed by that law of attraction which gives the minutest atom an influence on the planetary motions, what a combination appears within sacred times of the most contrasted elements of omniscient Wisdom! Human science sinks exhausted at the very threshold of this temple of Divine Truth. It has strained its utmost efforts in calculating the actual revolutions of the moon and the earth; but the determining causes which fixed at first the proportions of their monthly and yearly revolutions have altogether eluded its research. Yet these elements of the natural universe are linked in by these sacred times and celestial cycles with the deepest wonders of Providence, and the whole range of Divine prophecy. How glorious, then, must be the inner shrine, lit up with the Shekinah of the Divine Presence, where the

approaches themselves reveal such a secret and hidden wisdom."¹

Astronomical Tables computed from the Prophetic Times

These Tables give the dates in days, hours, and minutes, of all the vernal equinoxes and mean and true new moons for 3555 years, from the probable date of the Exodus, B.C. 1622 to A.D. 1934. They occupy more than 600 pages, and contain 101,217 solar and lunar dates; 87,938 new moons (43,969 mean and 43,969 true new moons), and also 4862 mean full moons and 4862 true full moons connected with lunar eclipses.

The correctness of the Tables is proved by their correspondence with historically recorded dates, and especially with more than 12,000 solar and lunar eclipses, ancient and modern, including all the calculated eclipses in Oppolzer's *Canon der Finsternisse*, up to A.D. 1934.

The whole of these Tables have been calculated by means of the prophetic Times in the Book of Daniel. Those Times are soli-lunar cycles of long range and great accuracy; and the adjustment of the prophetic Times in the Book of Daniel to soli-lunar cycles is but part of the adjustment of the whole system of revealed chronology to the time order of nature.

The following letter from Dr. Dreyer, F.R.A.S.,

¹ *Elements of Prophecy*, p. 371.

formerly editor of the astronomical journal *Copernicus*, and Director of the Armagh Observatory, testifies to the correctness and value of my Tables.

"These Tables give the date, hour, and minute of every new moon from the year B.C. 1622 to A.D. 1934, as well as the Dominical letters, and the time of vernal equinox, for every year of this period. Hitherto chronologists who required the time of any new moon have had to calculate it from Largeteau's Tables published in the *Connaissance des Temps pour l'an 1846*; or, if very great accuracy was required, by Oppolzer's *Syzygien-Tafeln für den Mond* (Leipzig, 1881), but Dr. Guinness's Tables give the time of the new moon by mere inspection without any calculation whatever. In his introduction the author illustrates the accuracy of his Tables by a comparison with the time of the first solar eclipse of each century, taken from Oppolzer's *Canon der Finsternisse*, and shows that his Tables never differ from these more than two hours, while the differences frequently amount to only a few minutes. I have myself tested the Tables by means of a number of eclipses rigorously computed by Stockwell (eclipses observed in India, B.C. 1386, 1301, 1250), by Schjellerup (B.C. 707, 599, and 547, observed in China), and by Newcomb (Arabian eclipses from the Middle Ages), and with the same result. *These Tables are therefore somewhat more accurate than*

those of Largeteau, and of course vastly more convenient, as they do not entail any calculation.

"These Tables have been calculated by means of the luni-solar cycles discovered by the Swiss astronomer De Cheseaux, about the middle of last century, but hitherto very little noticed by scientific men. The cyclical new moons thus found are given in the Tables side by side with the true new moons obtained from them by equating for solar and lunar anomaly. Astronomers will be much interested in the remarkable accuracy obtained in this way by Dr. Guinness. The Tables will be of great practical value to chronologists and historians, who can find from them the day of the week and the age of the moon corresponding to any date. Particularly to students of Oriental history they will be invaluable, as the moon is the clock hand of Eastern nations. But they will also in many cases be of great use to astronomers as a ready means of finding, by a mere glance, the whereabouts of the moon in the sky at any time during the last three thousand years.

"J. L. E. DREYER.

"ARMAGH OBSERVATORY,
"April 8th, 1895."

I have similar testimonies from other astronomers as to the value of the Tables. Dr. Downing, F.R.A.S., Superintendent of the *Nautical Almanac*, says: "Your Tables may be used with the greatest confidence." W. F. Lynn, F.R.A.S., says: "They have evidently been computed with great care and accuracy." A.

Marth, F.R.A.S., late of the Markree Observatory, wrote: "We have been working in the same field, and I highly appreciate the thoroughness with which you have tilled your portion. As regards the chief aim you have at heart, the proving of Daniel's prophetic 2300 days to refer to the soli-lunar cycle of 2300 years, it would have been sufficient to give the list of comparisons on p. xvii of your Tables."

Testimonials from Astronomers

M. F. Tisserand, Director of the *Paris Observatory*:
"Je partage entièrement l'avis exprimé par MM. Dreyer et Downing sur l'utilité que prétendront vos Tables pour la Chronologie Scientifique."

[*Translation.*]

"I entirely agree with the opinion expressed by Messrs. Dreyer and Downing as to the usefulness for purposes of Scientific Chronology which you claim for your Tables."

Professor Wolfer of *Zurich*: "Your work, which contains a vast amount of labour, will prove to be exceedingly convenient and useful in many kinds of chronological and calendariographical as well as in astronomical investigations."

M. Schiaparelli, Director of the *Milan Observatory*, says that the usefulness of the Tables "pour les recherches historiques et chronologiques est évidente." The work, "Nous épargnera bien de travail

dans plusieurs occasions. Sa place dans la Bibliothèque de l'Observatoire sera assignée entre la *Chronologie* d'Ideler, et les *Origines Kalenderiæ* de Greswell; c'est assez vous montrer l'estime que nous en faisons."

[Translation.]

"The usefulness of the Tables in historical and chronological research is evident. They will often save us considerable labour. They will be given a place in the library of the observatory between the *Chronology* of Ideler and the *Origines Kalenderiæ* of Greswell; which is sufficient to show you the esteem in which we hold them."

M. G. Lorenzoni, Director of the *Observatory of the University of Padua*, writes: "Non posso fare ameno de manifestar la mia ammirazione per l'opera colossale ed utilissima da lei compiuta così degnamente, encomiato dalle maggiori autorità astronomiche."

[Translation.]

"I cannot do less than express my admiration for the colossal and useful work which you have executed so well, which has been praised by the greatest astronomical authorities."

The Director of the *Vatican Observatory in Rome* writes that the work "Merita specialissime considerazioni sia per l'importanza del libro sia per lo svolgimento dei temi, sia soprattutto per il lavoro di gran lena delle tavole, che più meritatamente

chiamarei Capolavoro d'Astronomia. La paziente ed accurata calcolo delle tavole degli equinozi di primavera e delle nuove lune vecchio stile per 3555 anni, formano un materiale di dati interessantissimi che dispensano avviluppati calcoli, nelle ricerche storiche ed astronomiche."

[Translation.]

The work "deserves special consideration for the importance of the book, as well as for the development of the subject, and especially for the laborious work in getting up the astronomical Tables, which I shall name with good reasons an Astronomical Masterpiece.

"The accurate and very detailed calculations of the Tables of Vernal Equinoxes and New Moons—old style—for 3555 years, form a work of very useful dates, which saves tedious calculations in historical and astronomical researches."

The well-known astronomer, Simon Newcomb, of the *Nautical Almanac Office, Washington*, writes: "Should I ever return to the subject of Eclipses and Chronology, I shall expect to find the Tables very useful."

Professor Young, of the *Princeton Observatory*, writes: "The Astronomical Tables will be very valuable to me in a number of ways. The statements of Dreyer, Downing, and others, are quite conclusive as to the practical conformity of the data given in your

Tables with those obtained by Oppolzer, Newcomb, and others directly from the lunar theory."

Edward S. Holden, Director of the *Lick Observatory, California*, says: "The Astronomical Tables are an extremely convenient aid to historical and chronological inquiries, and are particularly welcome. I congratulate you on the publication of this work."

Mr. B. A. Gould, of the *Cambridge Observatory, Massachusetts*, says: "This extensive work cannot fail to be of very great convenience and service to investigators of chronological problems, as also to astronomers who require a knowledge of the position of the moon at any date during the interval of $35\frac{1}{2}$ centuries extending from the earliest authentic history to an epoch still in the future. As far as I am able to form an opinion, the accuracy of the Tables is quite close to that afforded by the most trustworthy lunar theory. I shall value them highly, and hope to derive much assistance from them."

The astronomer A. Auwers, of *Berlin Observatory*, writes: "In your Astronomical Tables you have accomplished a labour of considerable value, whose use will illuminate chronological inquiry in many ways most helpful in the study of the records of the past." (*Translation.*)

Lieutenant-Colonel Tupman, who organised the British expedition in 1874 for the observation of the transit of Venus, and subsequently deduced from the observations the solar parallax, writes from *Hillfoot*

Observatory, Harrow: "The great expense you have incurred in the computation and publication of your extensive lunar Table will be rewarded by the appreciation of numberless students who have had hitherto either to make the calculations themselves, or to get some one else to do it for them, which many could hardly afford. It must be a great satisfaction to you to have arrived at the end of your labours, and to have given this valuable information to the world."

The well-known Professor, Dr. T. G. Galle, Director of the *Observatory of the Royal University, Breslau*, writes: "Allow me in the name of the Observatory to thank you cordially for your valued gift, *Creation Centred in Christ*, 2 vols. It is not only the Astronomical Tables in the second volume, valuable in various directions for astronomical researches, but especially the first volume, containing the results of labour not less important, which has fixed my attention and wakened the highest interest."

"The defence of the Christian truths in opposition to the unproved doctrines of many of the learned in the present day, is presented in a form so clear, and with so much labour necessitated by the assemblage of facts and truths in order to place in the clearest light the subject treated, as to impart to the work a value which entitles it to the greatest attention." (*Translation.*)

These Testimonials might be extended, as the Tables are now to be found in the leading astronomical observatories throughout the world.

*Relation of the Prophetic Times to the Annus Magnus
of the Revolution of the Solar Perigee with refer-
ence to the Equinoxes*

This vast cycle occupies nearly 21,000 years, and includes in the course of its revolution not only the past ages of human history, but initial future ages connected with the Kingdom of God. The solar perigee is the point in the earth's orbit where the sun approaches most closely to the earth. The sun is three millions of miles nearer to the earth when in perigee than when in apogee. The equinoxes are the points where the annual path of the sun crosses the equator. Owing to a revolution in the direction of the earth's pole the equinoxes slowly retreat, occupying 25,870 years in their complete revolution. On the other hand, the sidereal direction of the earth's elliptic orbit still more slowly advances, in a vast revolution of 109,800 years. The result of these two contrary movements is the cycle of 21,000 years, in which the perigee makes a complete revolution with reference to the equinoxes.

These movements furnish us with magnificent measurements of the course of terrestrial time. By the revolution of the equinoxes the place of the sun when crossing the equator slowly shifts among the stars, retrograding through all the signs of the Zodiac. In the time of Abraham the sun of the vernal equinox was in Taurus, close to the Pleiades; two thousand years ago it was in Aries; it is now in Pisces. Thus

the hour hand of the celestial time-piece points successively to the twelve signs in the vast period of its revolution—a movement to the eye of the astronomer as visible as the revolution of the hands on the dial of a watch. While the equinox revolution affects the place of the sun in the constellations of the Zodiac, the perigee revolution produces a variation in the length of the seasons at different periods of time. “In the year 3958 B.C., or singularly enough near the epoch of the creation of Adam, the longitude of the sun's perigee coincided with the *autumnal equinox*; so the summer and autumn quarters were of equal length, but shorter than the winter and spring quarters, which were also equal. In the year 1267 A.D. the perigee coincided with the *winter solstice*; the spring quarter was therefore equal to the summer one, and the autumn quarter to the winter one, the former being the longest. In the year 6493 A.D. the perigee will have completed half a revolution, and will then coincide with the *vernal equinox*; summer will then be equal to autumn, and winter to spring; the former seasons, however, being the longest. In the year 11719 A.D. the perigee will have completed three-fourths of a revolution, and will then coincide with the *summer solstice*; autumn will then be equal to winter, but longer than spring and summer, which will also be equal. And finally in the year 16945 A.D. the cycle will be completed by the coincidence of the solar perigee with the *autumnal equinox*.”¹

¹ Chambers's *Handbook of Astronomy*, vol. i. pp. 110, 111.

In his *Outlines of Astronomy*, Sir John Herschel gives the following periods:—

"Revolution of the equinox	25,868 years.
Sidereal revolution of the direction of the earth's orbit	109,830 "
Revolution of the perigee with reference to the equinox "	20,984 "

"The vernal equinox and the perihelion recede from each other by the joint annual amount of $61''.9$, or a degree in 58.16 years, which is in effect the same as if the perihelion made a complete revolution with reference to a fixed equinox in 20,984 years."¹

Revolution of the perigee with reference to the equinox—Chambers	20,902 years.
Revolution of the perigee with reference to the equinox—Herschel	20,984 "
Mean	20,943 "

On comparing this *Annus Magnus* with the prophetic Times we observe that the sum of two of the prophetic periods equals its *months*, while the sum of three of the prophetic periods equals its *quarters*.

2520 lunar years = 2445 solar; 485 years = the "69½ weeks" of prophecy from the Ezra date, B.C. 457 to A.D. 29.

2445 years.		485 years.
2300 "		1260 "
490 "		1745 "
<u>5235</u> "		
	$5235 \times 4 = 20,940$	
	$1745 \times 12 = 20,940$	

¹ *Outlines of Astronomy*, 369b.

The 2300 years prophetic period (Dan. viii.) is 40 days of this vast year, a fact which brings the duration of the "treading down" of the Sanctuary into analogy with the 40 days, and 40 years Wilderness periods.

From the astronomic importance of the phenomenon, Laplace proposed that the middle of the thirteenth century, A.D. 1250, *when the perigee coincided with the winter solstice*, should be treated as an Era, and current years reckoned from it.

To us the chief importance of the date lies in the coincidence of the lowest depression of the sun's influence at its perigee, with the central point in the Middle Ages, that of the culmination of papal power. The interval from Innocent III. to Boniface VIII. was unquestionably the noon of papal dominion; persecution and papal pretensions were at their height; and A.D. 1268 witnessed the termination of the contest between the House of Hohenstaufen and the Pope in favour of the latter; a date at which *two winters coincided*—winter in the physical, and winter in the moral world.

Residual Phenomena in Solar and Lunar Years

Many, if not most, of the important discoveries of astronomy have been made by the study of residual phenomena. Unexplained fractional remainders were found in solar, lunar, or planetary revolutions, whose examination led to the discovery of important laws. This is strikingly seen in the

case of Kepler's laws, which laid the foundation for the discovery of the law of gravitation by Sir Isaac Newton. Copernicus supposed that the planets revolve around the sun in circles, but there were fractional differences in their movements which refused to harmonise with a circular motion. The study of these led Kepler to the discovery of the elliptic form of the paths pursued by the planets, and the law of equal areas in equal times. Numerous illustrations might be given of the importance in astronomy of the study of residual phenomena.

Now soli-lunar "epact" is an instance of the occurrence of residual phenomena in natural times. *It is a fractional remainder in solar and lunar years.* Its study leads to a knowledge of the hiding of God's redeeming purposes in the order of Nature. The Spiritual is hidden in the Natural: the new in the old. For the redeeming purpose of God has been *from the beginning*; and the revolutions of the glorious worlds around us are, in their time order, the expression of His eternal love.

Incommensurateness of Solar and Lunar Revolutions

The day, the month, and the year are incommensurate periods. The year is not an exact multiple of the day, but contains nearly six hours in addition to 365 days (365.242 days). The month

measures 29 days plus the fraction 12 hours 44 minutes 3 seconds (29.530 days). The year measures 12 lunar months plus 10 days 21 hours. These fractions grow by repetition to complete days, months, and years in certain periods which may be described as *cyclical products of the inequalities of solar and lunar revolutions.*

The prophetic periods are such cycles! *They are cycles of harmonisation*, bringing solar and lunar revolutions into agreement; and they measure *historic periods of harmonisation*, the astronomic and the historic being mutually adjusted according to a common plan. In other words, cycles of moral harmonisation correspond with cycles of physical harmonisation, and this not on some minute scale, but on the scale of centuries and ages. How worthy this of God! Surely to see this great truth is to enter, in some measure, into the thoughts of Him who built the Universe, and who being its Builder was also the Father and Saviour of men, the Redeemer of mankind.

But not only are the prophetic times such cycles of harmonisation, but the time fragments which *accumulate* in their course to complete periods are also redemption intervals. And further, all this wonderful astronomical adjustment is but a part—a single section—of the adjustment of the whole scheme of things with which we are connected to the redemption or recovery of a ruined world.

Let us now consider somewhat more in detail

the development of *epact* in natural and revealed chronology.

(1) *In the relation of the lunar year to the solar.*

The solar year measures 12 lunar months (lunations) plus 10 days 21 hours, or nearly 11 days. This surplus fraction grows by annual repetition to 1 month in 3 years, 2 in 5 years, 3 months in 8 years, 4 months in 11 years, 5 months in 14 years, 6 months in 16 years, and 7 months in 19 years. In this period of 19 years there are two smaller cycles, 8 and 11 years, in which the epact is 3 and 4 months; these two cycles together make the more perfect 19 years cycle, in which the epact measures 7 complete months. Here, then, in its primary 19 years cycle, a cycle forming the foundation alike of the Jewish and the Christian Calendars, the 11 days annual fraction grows to sacred measures, in harmony with the seven months period appointed for the Levitical feasts prefiguring redemption history.

On tracing the development of this epact still further, we find it accumulates to 11 months in 30 years (19+11 years cycles), and then to 12 months in 33 years, and to a *full solar year* in $33\frac{1}{2}$ years (33 years 7 months 7 days, 33.585 years), the period which measured the earthly lifetime of our Lord. This $33\frac{1}{2}$ years cycle (33.6 years) may be considered *the unit* in the time order of history and the revolutions of the solar system.

Tracing the development of epact still further, we find it amounts to 18 months in 49 years (a cycle), and consequently to 180 months in 490 years, or 15 lunar years: that it becomes 70 lunar years and 7 months in 2300 years, and 75 solar years in 2520 years. Now the 49 years is the Jubilee cycle of the law, and 490, 2300, and 2520 years are prophetic times connected with redemption history; and moreover prophecy adds 75 years to 2520 years (or "seven times"), thereby adding to the period just that which nature adds to it; the astronomic revolution and the historic period corresponding the one with the other.¹ Thus, then, the annual 11 days fraction is the root element in a series of periods which measure redemption intervals, and grows to complete periods in Levitical, prophetic, and historic times connected with the redemption of mankind. The same principle applies to the development of epact in

(2) *The relation of the prophetic, or standard year of 360 days, to the solar year.*

The month is nearer 30 days than 29, and the year is nearer 12 months than 13; hence 12 months of 30 days, or 360 days, make a *standard year* employed in the prophetic Times; 1260 days are $3\frac{1}{2}$ such years; 2520 days are 7 such years. The relation of this standard year to 2520 days is remarkable. It is one-seventh of a number which is itself a *standard number*:

¹ See Dan. xii. ; 2520 lunar years + 75 solar = 2520 solar years.

1 ×	2520	=	2520
2 ×	1260	=	2520
3 ×	840	=	2520
4 ×	630	=	2520
5 ×	504	=	2520
6 ×	420	=	2520
7 ×	360	=	2520
8 ×	315	=	2520
9 ×	280	=	2520
10 ×	252	=	2520

The number 2520 is the least common multiple of the first ten numbers. Numerical perfection thus underlies the framework of the prophetic Times.

On comparing the standard prophetic year of 360 days with the solar year, we observe that the latter measures 360 days plus 5 days 6 hours (or more accurately 5 days 5 hours 48 minutes 49 seconds, 5.2422 days). Tracing this fraction in its development in the two great prophetic periods of 490 years and 2300 years,¹ we find that it amounts in the first to 7 prophetic years plus 7 weeks, and in the second to 33 solar years. Both these periods are redemption intervals of the highest importance; the first is *the 7 years which contained the ministry and death of our Lord*; so that the last 7 years of the 490 were the "epact" of the whole period; thus the 490 years, as it were, brought forth the week of years in which redemption was accomplished, that week of years in whose "midst" the great redeeming sacrifice was offered. Tracing the development of this epact in 2300 years, we observe

¹ Dan. viii., ix.

that this period of *the treading down of the Jewish Sanctuary*¹ brings forth in the form of epact *the 33 years of the humiliation of that far nobler Sanctuary, the Temple of His Body*, who said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

(3) *The epact in the relation of the equable year of 365 days to the solar year.*

The equable year of 365 days was the year of patriarchal and Egyptian chronology. The fraction of 5 hours 48 minutes 49 seconds in the solar year over and above 365 days grows by annual repetition to 8 days in 33 years, and this with such exactness as to make 33 years the proper basis of the Calendar. Thus instead of intercalating as we do, 6 hours × 4, or 1 day in 4 years, and 8 days in 32 years, which is far from exact, the better way would be to defer the 8th intercalation of a day from the 32nd to the 33rd year, with the result that it would require 5000 years to produce the error of a single day in the Calendar.²

¹ Dan. viii. 13-14.

² "A rule proposed by Omar, a Persian astronomer of the court of Gelaleddin Melek Schah, in A.D. 1079 (or more than five centuries before the reformation of Gregory), deserves notice. It consists in interpolating a day, as in the Julian system, every fourth year, only postponing to the 33rd year the intercalation which on that system would be made in the 32nd. This is equivalent to omitting the Julian intercalation altogether in each 128th year (retaining all the others). To produce an accumulated error of a day on this system would require a lapse of 5000 years, so that the Persian astronomer's rule is not only far more simple, but materially more exact than the Gregorian."—Herschel's *Outlines of Astronomy*, p. 690.

PLANETARY REVOLUTIONS AND PROPHEPIC TIMES

The solar system is one. Its planets constitute a family of worlds, revolving around the same centre of light, heat, and gravitation; travelling in analogous elliptic orbits; sweeping forward in the same direction; and harmonising with each other in the ratio of their distances to their times. Long did Kepler ponder the problem of that harmony. At last its solution shone upon him as a sublime discovery—"The squares of the periodic times of any two planets are to each other in the same proportion as the cubes of their mean distances from the sun." The following table exhibits the fact:—

TABLE OF PLANETARY DISTANCES AND TIMES

	Distance Period,		Cube of Distance. d^3 .	Square of Period. p^2 .	Ratio of Cube of Distance to Square of Period. $\frac{d^3}{p^2}$.
	d.	p.			
Mercury .	0.387	0.241	57,961	580	100
Venus .	0.723	0.615	377,933	3,782	100
Earth .	1.00	1.00	1,000,000	10,000	100
Mars .	1.52	1.88	3,525,688	35,344	100
Planetoids	2.50	4.00	15,625,000	160,000	100
Jupiter .	5.20	11.86	140,608,000	1,406,596	100
Saturn .	9.54	29.50	868,250,664	8,702,500	100
Uranus .	19.18	84.00	7,055,792,632	70,560,000	100
Neptune .	30.00	164.60	27,000,000,000	270,931,600	100

Creation Centred in Christ, vol. i. p. 112; from Lardner's *Astronomy*.

The ingenuity of Kepler in propounding theories of planetary motion was marvellous, and his perseverance in applying and testing them no less astonishing. The movements of Mars, the ellipticity of whose orbit is considerable, long and profoundly perplexed him. "Prenez donc pitié de moi," he writes, "qui ai fait ces calculs 70 fois, et ne vous étonnez pas que j'ai passé cinq ans sur cette théorie de Mars." Had he studied as assiduously the "pattern" of times and forms revealed to Moses "in the Mount," he might have found the solution there; *for in that "pattern" of things the times are squared, and the spaces cubed.* The times are squared in the sacred law of seven weeks, and that of seven times seven years. The first of these Divinely appointed periods ended with the Day of Pentecost, the second with the year of Jubilee. And in that Divine law the space measuring the Holiest was cubed, for the "Holiest of all" in the Tabernacle measured $10 \times 10 \times 10$ cubits; as that in the Temple $20 \times 20 \times 20$ cubits; while the New Jerusalem, the City which is God's Temple, measures $12000 \times 12000 \times 12000$ furlongs: "*the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal*" (Rev. xxi. 16).

Adjustment of the Periods of the Planets to the Times and Seasons of Redemption Chronology

The subject is one of peculiar interest; for, added to its loftiness and sublimity, it opens to us a field of discovery never hitherto explored. Astronomers

have done nothing to cast light upon it; they have only accumulated material which can be used in its study. Historians and theologians have written nothing on the subject; it thus lies open to our examination as wholly virgin soil.

In entering on an examination of the adjustment of the periods of the planets to the times and seasons of redemption chronology, we naturally begin with Mercury, the planet nearest to the sun; and the first fact that we observe is that the

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS OF ISRAEL IN EGYPT

equal 1260 synodic revolutions of Mercury.

The years followed by the Israelites in Egypt were naturally Egyptian years, or years of 365 days in length. Four hundred such years equal 146,000 days, and 1260 synodic revolutions of Mercury equal 146,005 days, or 400 Egyptian years and 5 days.¹

We remember the Vision beheld by Abraham "when the sun was going down," and deep sleep fell upon the Patriarch, and a "horror of great darkness," and the Voice he heard amid the gloom which foretold the sufferings of his seed: "know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterwards they

¹ The synodic period of Mercury, according to the *Annuaire du Bureau des Longitudes*, one of the highest astronomical authorities, is 115,877 days, which multiplied by 1260 is 146,005 days.

shall come out with great substance." In the planetary measurement of this period the interval of 1260 years first appears, rising on the view like a star amid the gloom. It is seen as years of Mercury; not the equinoctial year of the planet, which is but 88 days (87,968 days), but its synodic year, or the return of the planet to the same position with reference to the sun and the earth; a movement closely watched by the Egyptians from remote times, and shown in Ptolemy's Tables prepared in Alexandria, in which the fact that 1260 synodic revolutions of the planet equal 400 Egyptian years is plainly stated.

Terminating as it did with the glorious Exodus from Egypt, the 400 years of Israel's bondage typified the bondage of the spiritual seed of Abraham, ending with the advent of deliverance at the manifestation of the Kingdom of God; a fact on which the Apocalyptic symbols representing that deliverance are based; for those symbols are borrowed from the judgements on Pharaoh and Egypt by which the Exodus was brought about (Rev. xvi.). It was fitting, since the period of Israel's bondage and that of the bondage of the Church are analogous in character, that they should be *analogous in measurement*; an analogy brought about by the employment in their measures of the planetary revolutions of Mercury and the Earth. And so it came to pass that when 1260 revolutions of Mercury were accomplished, and that planet returned for the 1260th time to the same position with reference to the sun and

the earth, that the judgement on the Egyptians of the Passover night was executed, and Israel went forth from captivity a redeemed and emancipated people.

Shall it not be thus with the Church of God? Already 1260 years from the rise of Papal supremacy have led to the French Revolution and the overthrow of the Papal Temporal Power in 1870; shall not the added 75 years of Daniel's closing prophecy bring about an era of final deliverance? We may not be able to fix the exact chronology of that event; it may occur at an earlier date than that which the times in question indicate; but must it not be near at hand?

Have the planets more to tell us? Yes, if we have eyes to see, and ears to hear.

Of all the periods of prophecy none is of greater importance than the "seventy weeks" which extended from the restoration of Jerusalem under Artaxerxes to the coming, and "cutting off," of Messiah the Prince. Measured as we have seen from the decree in the time of Nehemiah, B.C. 444, to the crucifixion in A.D. 29, exactly $69\frac{1}{2}$ "weeks" of lunar years extended; a period of 472 solar years, or $486\frac{1}{2}$ lunar. If now we measure the revolution of Mercury and Venus from the Nabonassar starting-point of the four kingdoms of prophecy and history—a method indicated and justified by the 1260 lunar years duration of the four kingdoms in their primary undivided form from that starting-point, which ended at the fall of the Western Roman Empire in A.D. 476—we reach the following result—

THE "SEVENTY WEEKS" OF PROPHECY.

1260 equinoctial revolutions of the planet *Mercury* extended to the *beginning* of the period, or the time when Nehemiah reached Jerusalem, in B.C. 444, on his mission to rebuild the city; and 1260 equinoctial revolutions of the planet *Venus* extended to the *close* of the period, and the predicted "cutting off" of Messiah, to "make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness."

In support of this statement let it be observed that (1) the equinoctial period of Mercury occupies 87'968 days, which multiplied by 1260 equals $303\frac{1}{2}$ solar years; and this was the period which extended from the Nabonassar Era, February 26, B.C. 747, to the autumn of B.C. 444, when Nehemiah reached Jerusalem.

(2) The equinoctial period of Venus occupies 224'695 days, which multiplied by 1260 measures 775 solar years and 53 days; and this was the period which extended from the Nabonassar Era to the midst of the 40 days which succeeded the resurrection of our Lord, and terminated with His ascension.

It is the fashion in the present day to underrate the value of the prophecies of Daniel, and to neglect the prophetic Times which he was Divinely commissioned to foretell; and the result is a weakened faith in the Messianic character and redeeming work of Christ, predicted in the writings of that prophet. But now what do we behold? We see the period of

"70 weeks" foretold by that prophet accompanied and measured by the revolutions of the planets Mercury and Venus; and as we watch the movements of these bright revolving worlds, and mark their harmonious measures, we feel lifted up above the murky smoke of the battlefield of modern doubt and denial, into that serener, loftier sphere, where angels dwell who ponder the times and seasons of God's redeeming work, "desiring," as we read, "to look into" these things, and as it were shadowing the mercy seat with their wings. Thus the stars lead us to Calvary and the Resurrection, as celestial witnesses of redeeming love and mercy.

We have now to point out a second association of the "70 weeks" and 1260 years in another form, in the equinoctial and synodic revolutions of Venus as measured from one and the same point, the Nabonassar Era.

THE 775 YEARS FROM THE NABONASSAR ERA TO THE CRUCIFIXION

From B.C. 747 to A.D. 29 the interval is 775 solar years. This interval equals 1260 equinoctial revolutions of Venus,¹ and also equals 485 synodic revolutions of that planet.

The interval from the decree of Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign, under which Ezra went up to Jerusalem to restore it, B.C. 457, to the year of the crucifixion, A.D. 29, was 485 years. On comparing

¹ p. 173.

this period with planetary times we observe the fact that *485 synodic revolutions of Venus, and 1260 equinoctial revolutions of that planet, are, within a few days, the same in length.* This holds good from whatever starting-point these times are measured: and this period of 485 synodic revolutions of Venus, or 1260 equinoctial revolutions of the planet, equals the interval extending from the Nabonassar Era to the death and resurrection of our Lord.

Thus evermore, we may say, "the bright and morning star" is pointing us by its revolutions to the 1260 years and "69½ weeks" of prophecy, and leading us to the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness" with "healing in His wings" (Mal. iv. 2).

But we have not done with Venus. What if we should compare 1260 equinoctial revolutions of the planet with 1260 of its synodic revolutions? To what conclusion would the comparison lead? Keeping to the same starting-point of the four kingdoms, the Nabonassar Era, we reach a remarkable fact. We find that while 1260 of the equinoctial years of the planet extend from the Nabonassar Era to Christ, 1260 synodic revolutions extend to the culmination of Papal power in the middle of the thirteenth century, the central point of the Dark Ages; and to the year A.D. 1268, the very date of the culmination of Papal power, and also—let it be remarked—the year of the coincidence of the solar perigee with the winter solstice in the *Annus Magnus* of the revolution of the perigee with reference to the

equinoxes and solstices, occupying 21,000 years. So important did the astronomer Laplace consider that coincidence, that he proposed that instead of reckoning our years from the Nativity we should reckon them from this astronomical event in the middle of the thirteenth century. Two winters, as we have said elsewhere, coincided at that date; *winter in the moral world*, the winter of moral darkness and death; and *winter in the physical world*, in the lowest depression of solar influence at the date of the sun's nearest approach to the earth. And to this date the 1260 synodic revolutions of Venus are set; for they measure 2014 years, which is the period which extends from the Nabonassar Era, B.C. 747, to A.D. 1268.¹

Century after century Papal supremacy ascended to its culminating point in A.D. 1268; and at this date began its long decline. The period from Innocent III. to Boniface VIII. was the noonday of the Papacy, and the year 1268 was that which witnessed the termination of the contest between the House of Hohenstaufen and the Pope in favour of the latter.

If now we compare the full period of

The Revolution of the Solar Perigee

with the prophetic Times, 1260 and 485 years, we reach a further result of analogous import. We find that 1260+485 years, or 1745 years, measure the

¹ 1260 syn. p. Venus (583'921 days $\times$ 1260) = 735,740 days.
2014 sol. y. (365'242 $\times$ 2014) = 735,597 days.

The difference is only 143 days, by which the 1260 planetary revolutions exceed 2014 solar years.

month, or twelfth, of the *Annus Magnus* of the perigee revolution; for $1745 \times 12 = 20,940$ years, the time occupied in the revolution of the perigee with reference to the equinoxes.¹

The first planet exterior to the earth is Mars; on measuring from the Nabonassar Era we find that

1260 Years of the Planet Mars

extend to the revolutionary period connected with the downfall of the Roman Empire in its ten-kingdomed form.

(1) One thousand two hundred and sixty *equinoctial* revolutions of Mars are 2369 solar years, which is the period which extends from the Nabonassar Era to A.D. 1623, at which date the English revolutionary era commenced. In Green's *History of England* this date is recognised; section III. in chapter viii. relating to "the King and the Parliament," being dated 1623 to 1629. With this revolutionary period, leading to the execution of Charles I., began the overthrow of monarchical power characteristic of modern times. The rise of republican America may be dated from the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620. The culmination of the revolutionary movement took place at the execution of Louis XVI. in 1793, when the French Republic was established; a movement continued in the revolutions of 1848 and 1870, whose termination in the final overthrow of the divided Roman Empire cannot be distant now.

¹ See page 160.

(2) One thousand two hundred and sixty synodic revolutions of Mars occupy 2691 years, the period which extends from the Nabonassar Era to A.D. 1945. Remembering that to the second half of "7 Times" Daniel adds 75 years in the last chapter of his prophecy, we note that A.D. 1945 is 75 years later than A.D. 1870, the date of the downfall of Papal Temporal Power at the culmination of Papal exaltation by the decree of Papal Infallibility. We further notice that 2300 solar years from the birth of Alexander the Great, and 2300 calendar years from his death, terminate in A.D. 1945. While regarding this date as probably one of great importance in relation to the duration of the four Empires, and the downtreading of the Jewish people and "Sanctuary," *we avoid the attempt to predict the time of the second advent of Christ.* As "a thief in the night" will be the coming of that great event—an occurrence for which we should always be prepared.

Beyond the orbit of Mars we come to *a break in the planetary system* corresponding with the break in the order of prophetic events.

POSITION AND CHARACTER OF THE ASTEROIDS

Whatever their origin, the four or five hundred asteroids, revolving midway between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, *occupy the place of a planet*, and were first discovered by the recognition of the probable existence of an unobserved planet in that part of the system. The average time the asteroids,

or planetoids, occupy in revolution round the sun is about four years; a period intermediate between the nearly two years of the period of Mars, and the twelve years of Jupiter. While the planets Mercury to Mars are certainly adjusted to Redemption Chronology, and the greater planets Jupiter to Neptune extend that adjustment to analogous periods in "the ages to come," the asteroids occupy the place of a missing world, and suggest by their position and character *their correspondence with a break in the order of historical and prophetic events—the kind of break which prophecy foretells.* According to the Word of God, "the stone" cut out "without hands," will fall upon the feet of the Colossus, representing the four Gentile kingdoms, and *break it to pieces* so that it shall become like the dust of the threshing floor which the winds of heaven disperse, before that stone becomes "a mountain" and "fills the earth." That this destructive judgement corresponds with that foretold under the vials of the Apocalypse, especially the overwhelming judgement of Rev. xix. verse 11 to the end, is evident. With reference to this, the terminal Judgement of the present Dispensation, Chalmers wrote in 1836 as follows: "Of this I am well satisfied, that the next coming (whether in person or not, I forbear to say) will be a coming, not to the final judgement, but to precede and usher in the millennium. I utterly despair of the universal prevalence of Christianity, as the result of a pacific missionary process, under the guidance of human

wisdom and principle. But without slackening in the least our obligation to help forward this great cause, *I look for the conclusive establishment through a widening passage of desolating judgements, with the utter demolition of our present civil and ecclesiastical structures.*"¹

We recall in this connection the words of our Lord: "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Matt. xxi. 42-44).

THE GREATER PLANETS

1260 Revolutions of the Planet Jupiter

If the present century is that of the close of "the times of the Gentiles," or the duration of the four Gentile kingdoms of history and prophecy, it is also that of the commencement of the millennial kingdom of Christ, in which the "stone," which has smitten and destroyed "the image," becomes "a mountain," and fills the earth. Under the sounding of the seventh trumpet great voices are heard in

¹ Letter of Chalmers to Rev. Edward Bickersteth, quoted in author's work, *History Unveiling Prophecy*, p. 245.

heaven saying, "the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever."

The revolutions of the greater planets, and in the first place those of the magnificent planet Jupiter, the greatest planet in the system, seem especially suited to measure the chronology of the future kingdom of God.

An examination of the period occupied by Jupiter in revolving round the sun, or the year of that planet, reveals the interesting fact that 1260 revolutions of Jupiter will extend from the close of this century, A.D. 2000, to the completion of the revolution of the solar perigee with reference to the equinox in the year A.D. 16945.¹

Completion of the revolution of the solar perigee by its coincidence with the autumnal equinox	A.D. 16945
1260 sidereal revolutions of Jupiter from A.D. 2000	A.D. 16946

But this glorious period is only introductory,—

1260 Revolutions of the Planet Uranus

extend from A.D. 2000 to the completion of the *sidereal* revolution of the solar perigee, as measured from B.C. 2000, the *Terminus a quo* of Redemption Chronology.

The sidereal revolution of the perigee is that of the direction of the longer axis of the earth's elliptical

¹ See page 159.

orbit with reference to the surrounding stars. The movement in this case is an extremely slow one, occupying 109,830 years.

From B.C. 2000, 109,830 years extend to A.D. 107830
 From A.D. 2000, 1260 revolutions of Uranus
 extend to A.D. 107862

1260 Sidereal Revolutions of the Planet Neptune

Neptune, 30 times the distance of the earth from the sun, and 77 times the distance of Mercury, occupies 165 years in accomplishing its revolution (164'622 years). 1260 sidereal revolutions of this planet measure 207,423 years, while 8 revolutions of the equinoxes take place in 207,000 years. In this immense period, extending throughout 7000 years of human history, plus twice a hundred thousand years, the sun falls back through the twelve signs of the Zodiac eight times over!

At the call of Abraham, about the date of the building of the Pyramids of Egypt, twenty-one centuries B.C., the sun at the vernal equinox was in the constellation Taurus, *close to the Pleiades*. At the commencement of the Christian era the sun was in the constellation Aries. Slowly retrograding year by year in its movement of precession it is now, at the vernal equinox, in the constellation Pisces. In A.D. 23770 the sun will return to the place it occupied close to the Pleiades at the call of Abraham, the starting-point of Redemption history. Eight such revolutions equal 207,000 years.

On turning now to Saturn, which with its many rings and moons is unquestionably the most magnificent planet of the system, we find that

1260 Sidereal Revolutions of Saturn

occupy 37,117 years. We have already seen that the difference between the solar year and the lunar amounts to one solar year in $33\frac{1}{2}$ years (33'585 years), and that this luni-solar cycle measured the earthly lifetime of our Lord. *The cube of the cycle* is 37,883 years; which period, measured from the Nabonassar starting-point, terminates at the same time as 1260 revolutions of Saturn, measured from the year of the crucifixion, A.D. 29.

From the Nabonassar Era, B.C. 747,
 37,883 years extend to A.D. 37136
 From A.D. 29, 1260 revolutions of Saturn
 extend to A.D. 37146

We have seen reason to regard $33\frac{1}{2}$ years as a *unit in the measurement of historic periods*; what if *its cube* should be a *unit in the measurement of future ages*? The astronomer Mädler, who advanced the theory that the Pleiades formed the centre of the sidereal system, calculated that the time occupied by the solar system in revolving around that centre is about 18,200,000 years. On comparing this vast period with the cube of 33'585 years, we find that 500 times the latter is 18,941,500 years. We cannot, however, lay stress on this approximation, as Mädler's calculation rests on a conjectural basis, and the posi-

tion of the Pleiades is 26° out of the plane of the Galactic circle. That the Times and Seasons of Redemption should be chronological seeds destined to expand in the ages of the future, is, in the light of the growing character of the kingdom of God, a reasonable belief. Such a view harmonises with the law of development, and exalts our conceptions of the plan of Providence. Our anticipations are thus carried far beyond the thousand years of the proximate millennial kingdom into the ever-lengthening vista of post-millennial ages, throughout whose course the revolutions of suns and systems shall commemorate in their periodicity the wonders of redeeming love.

In concluding this planetary section we turn to the adjustment of the revolutions of the planet Mercury to the chronology of the Cross.

*Adjustment of Mercury's Revolutions to the Day
of the Crucifixion*

We recall the fact that the Latin Fathers assign the crucifixion to the year of the Consulship of the two Gemini, A.D. 29; and that the lunar revolutions point to Friday, March 18, as the day of the Passover, which according to the Gospel of John was the day of our Lord's crucifixion.

The interval from the Era of Nabonassar, Feb. 26, B.C. 747 to March 18, A.D. 29, is 283,088 days, which exactly equals 2443 synodic periods of Mercury.

The analogy of this period with the 2443 solar years which extended from the Era of Nabonassar to A.D. 1697, the date of the Peace of Ryswick, connected with the death and resurrection of the Protestant "Witnesses," and the full establishment in England of civil and religious liberty, is too remarkable to be overlooked. The last great Papal persecution was at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685; three and a half years later came the English Revolution under William of Orange, and the restoration of the exiled Vaudois under Henri Arnaud. The Peace of Ryswick marked the end of sanguinary conflict, and the beginning of a better age. Thanksgiving day was held on December 2, 1697, at which date the new Cathedral of St. Paul was dedicated for divine worship. More than 200 years have elapsed since that event, during which the Protestant nations have advanced to the leading position they at present occupy. That the " $3\frac{1}{2}$ Times" of the ministry of the sack-cloth clothed Witnesses, their death as slain by the wild beast power, and their resurrection after $3\frac{1}{2}$ days, and subsequent ascension to power, correspond with the $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of our Lord's ministry, His crucifixion, and resurrection on the third following day, and subsequent ascension to universal dominion, is evident. *To this striking analogy the times of nature and history are adjusted*; 2443 revolutions of Mercury, and 2443 solar years extending from the Era of Nabonassar to March 18, A.D. 29, and to the Peace of Ryswick in A.D. 1697. A fresh light is thus cast upon the

memorable declaration that the Church is "*called to the fellowship*" of the Son of God (1 Cor. i. 9), and a key is placed in our hands for the interpretation of the Apocalypse, that great prophecy which more than any other unfolds the mystery of the Church in its militant and triumphant states.

The astronomical periods we have thus briefly reviewed bring the revolutions of the whole solar system into harmony and close connection with the entire course of the Times and Seasons of Redemption Chronology. This salient fact has an important bearing on recent rationalistic criticisms of the Bible. *Astronomy is seen to bind together Levitical, Prophetic, and New Testament Redemption Times, including the chronology of the four Empires and of the Christian Church, as parts of a single system, septiform in character*, consisting of weeks on various scales, from weeks of days to weeks measuring thousands of years. To deny the existence of this chronological system engraved in Scripture, History, and Nature, is no longer possible; to remove it from its place is equally beyond the power of man.

A second fact of the deepest interest is made clear by these investigations, that of *the relation of this great system of Chronology to the Cross of Christ*. The most prevalent feature of the system is that of its *half-week periods*, or periods measuring "three and a half times," the 1260 series of periods. *The root of the series is the 3½ years of the ministry of Christ which terminated with the crucifixion, in fulfilment*

of the remarkable prophecy that Messiah should be "cut off," "*in the midst*" of the last week of years in the "*seventy weeks*." In further harmony with this the death of Christ took place at the close of $3\frac{1}{2}$ Times, or of 1260 revolutions of the planet Venus, reckoned from the Babylonian starting-point of the four kingdoms, the Nabonassar Era; which period was also, as we have seen, "69½ weeks" of the synodic revolutions of Venus (775 years). In still further harmony with this order of Times the final wave of the Gothic invasion of the Western Empire of Rome, ending the duration of the four kingdoms in their undivided imperial form, took place at the close of 1260 lunar years from the Nabonassar starting-point; while the close of the prophetic Times in A.D. 1945 (1870+75 years) coincides with the termination of 1260 synodic revolutions of Mars measured from the Nabonassar Era. The 1260 series of Planetary Times extending beyond this date complete with their stupendous periods this order of Times, and belong to future ages in the development of the kingdom of God. The principle of "cutting off," dissolution, or termination, "*in the midst*" of the week, is seen to be in harmony with *the structure of the solar system*, in which the four lesser and four larger planets are divided "in the midst" by a multitude of fragmentary worlds, the asteroids, circulating in the place of a planet between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. Granting the adjustment of the Times of the solar system to the Times of Redemption

Chronology, the place of these world fragments agrees with *the place of the destruction of the great image of Gentile sovereignty, by the fall of the Stone cut out "without hands,"* which shall "break in pieces" Imperial power, and give to the winds of heaven the dust of its remains, before "the Stone" becomes "a Mountain" and fills the earth with its presence.

It seems reasonable to conclude that the great series of 1260 revolution periods, lunar, solar, and planetary, *is designed to commemorate the chronology of Redemption* throughout the course of future ages. By its means the Cross of Christ is lifted into a place of exaltation and age-long prominence; the flight of Time, instead of obliterating its recollection, recording its chronology by the stately revolutions of worlds, whose movements no created power can arrest. And thus are we led to the very portals of the sidereal system, the periods of whose innumerable worlds belong to the chronology of endless ages. From the far depths of that sidereal system there seems to come the faint echo of the voices of the revolving worlds of our own system; an echo which may yet swell into the mighty thunderings of a universal psalm of praise.

BEARING OF THE FOREGOING FACTS

- (1) *The Foregoing Facts sever the Tap-root of Modern Scepticism by their Demonstration of Ordered Progress versus Blind Evolution*

The facts we have considered, physical, mental, moral, spiritual, including a course of history involving supernatural events to whose place and chronology the order of Nature is adjusted, *exhibit an ordered Progress*, whose goal is the attainment of the Divine Image, or the conformity of the creature to the highest standard of moral perfection, and the realisation of an eternal kingdom of righteousness, joy, and peace, in which God shall be all in all.

There is no setting aside the facts which have come before us. The historical events cannot be denied, or the conformity of history to the outline laid down in prophecy. The course of the four great kingdoms of history was foretold twenty-five centuries ago. The advent of the Messiah and the Kingdom of Heaven were predicted during a long succession of centuries. The very chronology of the four kingdoms and of Messiah's advent was foretold: how long these kingdoms should endure, and when He, the great Redeemer, should appear. The revolutions of sun, and moon, and planets, were adjusted from the beginning to the times and seasons of this revealed chronology. Dcentric in character, history

is adjusted to the Cross and Kingdom of Christ; the First Advent being the centre of its converging and diverging lines, while the Kingdom of God is the goal of its political movement.

Further, Geology, History, and Prophecy combined exhibit a continuous advance from the material to the mental, the moral, and the spiritual. The "second man" and the second race, occupying the place of the goal of the movement, have already appeared; the glorification of the Head of the new humanity has taken place, and the spiritual regeneration of those who are the subjects of His kingdom. The natural order of historical events has thus been crowned by a supernatural order. Jesus Christ crucified on Calvary has been raised from the dead. His resurrection, sealed by apostolic testimony, Divine gifts, and Christian experience, is the keystone of the sublime arch of Revelation; while Nature itself is set to the movement in which that Resurrection is the central event. In the old order of things the new is written; latent in its types, shadows, and adjustments, it uplifts the old order into harmony with the new. One design embraces the whole; one mind is manifest in its various parts, and its sublime totality.

This spectacle of ordered progress utterly disproves the theory of the blind evolution of the mighty system of things to which we belong.

It is well to see clearly the root and ramifications of this form of modern unbelief. Its central prin-

ciple is *naturalism*. The supernatural in History, Revelation, Religion, and personal Experience is denied. Nothing remains but a blind evolution in which no designing mind can be traced, no worthy goal discovered.

We might argue that no such blind evolution has been demonstrated; that it is simply a hypothesis; that the causes which have been assigned in explanation of the progress visible in nature and history are wholly inadequate to the effects; such arguments have been ably advanced, and no adequate reply has been made to them. But we prefer to take a simpler position, one more level to universal comprehension. We say that *facts are against the theory of naturalism*. We say that the supernatural has actually occurred in history, and is daily occurring in experience. We point to Jesus Christ, and say that no theory of naturalism can explain His character, and the place which He occupies in History and in Nature. The Fact of Christ is the supreme answer to the erroneous theory of naturalism.

(2) *The Foregoing Facts place the Bible upon an Immovable Foundation*

History, Nature, and Experience witness to Christ, and Christ to the Bible.

Not always was it thus. The first believers were led by Scripture to Christ, while we are led by Christ to the Scriptures. An independent testimony to Christ outside the Scriptures has grown up in the

course of Time. Centuries of History—an accumulated mass of Experience, together with the ordinances of Nature witness to Him. The stars of heaven lead to Bethlehem. The constitution and course of Nature own His supremacy. And He to whom History, Nature, and Experience lead us points to that Book, and bids us search its pages, saying, "They are they which testify of Me." We cannot accept Him and reject Scripture, for Christ and Scripture are inseparable. All the Types, Prophecies, Doctrines, and Duties of the Bible, centre in Him. The Old Testament leads to Him, the New flows from Him. He is the Keystone of the Arch of Revelation, the luminous Sun in the centre of its system. On Him who is our Rock that Book is built; He abides for ever; and with Him the Scriptures to which He witnessed, saying, "Thy word is Truth."

(3) *The Foregoing Facts confirm the Witness of Prophecy*

The nature of this witness is comprehensively described by Bishop Butler in the following sentence:—

"If a long series of prophecy is applicable to the present state of the Church, and to the political situations of the kingdoms of the world, some thousand years after these prophecies were delivered; and a long series of prophecy delivered before the coming of Christ is applicable to Him; these things are in themselves a proof that the prophetic history

was intended of Him, and of those events: in proportion as the general turn of it is capable of such application, and to the number and variety of particular prophecies capable of it."¹

Events since Bishop Butler's time have much enlarged this evidence, especially those connected with the French Revolution, and the fall of the Papal Temporal Power in 1870. But, added to this, Prophecy is elevated now to a higher position, and placed on a surer foundation by the discoveries of astronomy; for the prophecies relating to the Christian Church, the kingdoms of the world, and the advent of Christ, are *chronological* as well as historical, and their chronology is shown by astronomy to be *engraved in the system of Nature*; the revolutions of the sun, moon, and planets being adjusted to its measures.

(4) *The Foregoing Facts show how best to prove the Truth of Christianity*

From the nature of the case the supreme proof is experimental. Supernatural soul-renewing power can only be known by experience. The heart must be cleansed in order that the vision may be cleared. We must enter the Kingdom of Heaven to behold it. And such were the teachings of Christ. "If any man," He said, "will do His will (the will of God) he shall know of the doctrine (of Christianity) whether it be of God." Doing the right leads to knowing the

¹ Butler's *Analogy*, Pt. II. c. vii. 2.

true. Doing the will of God leads to knowing the truth of God. Christianity is "Love revealed under its highest form." To know that love we must be brought into agreement with God; the objective truth and the subjective mind must harmonise.

Do the will that thou mayest know the doctrine. Make an experimental proof of the religion of Christ. *Try the remedy.*

Some years ago I met a striking illustration of the effect of such a trial on an infidel. A lady doctor in San Francisco, long a confirmed infidel, had become a humble, happy Christian. "How was the change brought about?" I asked her. "My attention was directed," she said, "to those words of Christ in John vii. 17, about doing the will of God in order to know the truth of Christianity, and I resolved to make the attempt to do all that I knew to be right. *In that honest effort I discovered my own sinfulness, and later on that the religion of Christ meets and satisfies our moral nature.*"

The testimony of two is true. Let me cite the experience of the naturalist Romanes as described in my work on *Creation centred in Christ*, vol. i. p. 20. Mr. George Romanes was a naturalist of a high order, as his works on *Animal Intelligence*, *Mental Evolution in Animals*, and *Mental Evolution in Man*, demonstrate. The esteem in which he was held by Darwin is evinced by the fact that the great naturalist gave Romanes all his MSS. relating to psychological subjects, with the request that he would

publish any parts he chose in his works on *Mental Evolution*. Perverted from religious faith by the influence of materialistic science, in his early life Romanes published anonymously a work entitled *A Candid Examination of Theism*, and in his riper years wrote a sequel to it which he called, *A Candid Examination of Religion*. While the former work was decidedly anti-religious, the latter was not only religious but Christian.

Romanes commenced his *Candid Examination of Religion* by acknowledging the tendency in scientific men to dogmatism. "Scientific men as a class," he tells us, "are quite as dogmatic as the straitest sect of theologians. . . . Never was any one more arrogant in his claims for pure reason than I was—more arrogant in spirit, though not in letter—this being due to contact with science." Humbled by juster views of the office of reason, and the limitations of its range, he describes the object of his last treatise to be "not to impart any philosophical system, or even positive knowledge, but a *frame of mind*" free from "undue confidence in merely syllogistic conclusions" in "regions of high abstraction."

Romanes then deplores the "oversight" of which he had been guilty in not being "sufficiently careful in examining the foundations of his criticism, *i.e.*, the validity of its premises." He had imagined that the question of Theism from the side of Reason "turned on the question as to the nature of natural causation," but he had "erred in not considering whether higher

causes are not necessary to account for spiritual facts, *i.e.*, whether the ultimate Being must not be at least as high as the intellectual and spiritual nature of man, *i.e.*, higher than anything merely physical or mechanical." He honestly confesses with Pascal that "man without God" is miserable. "Some men," he says, "are not conscious of the cause of this misery; this, however, does not prevent the fact of their being miserable. For the most part they conceal the fact as well as possible from themselves by occupying their minds with society, sport, frivolity of all kinds; or, if intellectually disposed, with science, art, literature, business, etc. This, however, is but to fill the starving belly with husks. *I know from experience* the intellectual distractions of scientific research, philosophical speculation, and artistic pleasures; but am also well aware that even when all are taken together, and well sweetened to taste, in respect of consequent reputation, means, social position, etc., *the whole concoction is but as high confectionery to a starving man.* He may cheat himself for a time—especially if he be a strong man—into the belief that he is nourishing himself by denying his natural appetite; but *he soon finds that he was made for some altogether different kind of food*, even though of much less tastefulness as far as the palate is concerned. There is *a vacuum in the soul of man which nothing can fill save faith in God.*"

In relation to the question of the evidence of the truth of Christianity, Romanes quotes John Hunter's

characteristic saying, "Do not think: try," and counsels his readers to "*try the only experiment available—the experiment of faith. Do the doctrine, and if Christianity be true, the verification will come; not, indeed, immediately through any course of speculative reasoning.*" "Christian belief is much more due to doing than to thinking, as prognosticated in the New Testament. 'If any man will *do* His will, he shall *know* of the doctrine, whether it be of God.'" As his deep personal conviction he declares that "only to a man destitute of spiritual perception can it be that Christianity should fail to appear the greatest exhibition of the beautiful, the sublime, and of all else that appeals to our spiritual natures, which has ever been known upon our earth."

RELATION OF REASON TO FAITH

The signs are not wanting of the rise of a new philosophy which shall give to the facts of revealed religion the place which should be theirs, not only as facts, but as facts of primary and supreme importance. Years ago it was my privilege to meet with one whose experience and mental attitude may be taken as an illustration of the character of the philosophy which is slowly emerging from the wreck of dead or dying speculations. He was an old man of remarkable history as far as philosophic speculation is concerned; one who for years had dwelt in the darkness of rationalistic, pantheistic, or atheistic thought, passing from one system of unbelief to another until at length the light of Divine Truth broke as an inward revelation upon his mind. He never committed his thoughts to writing, was the author of no book, but only a student, a thinker, an oral teacher, of large information, and keen penetration of intelligence, and of a reverent childlike spirit beautiful to behold. Fragments of his utterances are still preserved in a little volume entitled *Colloquia Peripatetica, or Notes of Conversations with the late John Duncan, LL.D., Professor of Hebrew in the New College, Edinburgh, 1873*. Selecting and combining some sentences from these notes, we will let Dr. Duncan speak for himself:—

"I am a philosophical sceptic who have taken refuge in Theology. I ascend to God. Reason, in some way unknown to me, 'overleaps itself.' I agree

with the Transcendentalists in this; if we are made 'in the image of God,' we can reach and positively apprehend Him in whose image we are made. Belief in God presses multifariously upon man. It is not wise to say 'this is its origin,' or 'no, that is its origin.' It is not here, or there, it is everywhere. It is an instinct. There is a knowledge of God which all men have, and a knowledge of Him which is only possible to the new creature. I cannot reach that by philosophy which God gives by inspiration. Faith in Him seems to be due to an 'anointing of the Holy One,' and if the 'anointing which we have received of Him abideth in us, we need not that any man teach us'; and if so, there must be some terrible falsity in that which says that all conviction must be due to demonstration. Our intuition or intuitive knowledge of God cannot be defined. You must not ask me to tell you what it is, for I tell you I cannot, and that no man can. Logic errs when it trespasses on the dominion of intuition, to fetter it. Whenever we worship we acknowledge there is a region above us, at once known and un-known, half clear and half dark. I believe that what our modern men call the 'internal evidence' is by far the deepest. But it is incommensurable.

"Conscience is the great root of Theism, and it leads within the veil, because the tree that springs from it breaks through phenomena. It is something supernatural within the natural, and there is no separating these two spheres, if you are true to

psychology. The web of the natural and the supernatural are so woven together in the soul that they cannot be untied. I think we get out of ourselves to a rock that is higher than we are, if we follow conscience to its source. I affirm that conscience testifies to law, to moral law, as the expression of an authoritative will. The laws of nature do not lead us beyond our own generalising mind, but moral law does; for if there be not another above me, my Lawgiver, then there is no law for me.

"I have sometimes thought that God's greatest power is seen in the most silent awakenings of the spirit of man. So it is in natural things; the daily course of the earth, silent and sure, with no jolt, or start forwards; so in all our vital acts, God acts in all of these directly. If our vital acts were in our own power we should not live a moment; why should it be otherwise in the spiritual sphere, where the soul awakens quietly at the touch of God. He is not far from any one of us, for 'in Him we live.' God is apprehended within the soul of man as the archetype of existence. We do not infer His being from what we are. We cannot rise to Him thus. But He is Himself within us. *His* voice, not the voice of conscience, may be heard.

"Revelation apart, I am a sceptic, *i.e.*, I am a philosophical sceptic. Sextus Empiricus was long my delight. I used to read the ancient sceptics and dogmatists, just to pit one against another in glorious war, and strove to beat them all to the dust like so many ninepins. I am a born philosophical sceptic,

but once I am theological I am sceptical no more. I got no rest to the sole of my foot till I rejected all speculation. What I rejected was not the tendency to speculate, but the pile of speculations. The miraculous is a question of *fact*, not of philosophy; of testimony, not of speculation—and God can testify as well as man. He can be His own witness-bearer.

"When Cæsar Malan said to me, on an ever-to-be-remembered day, 'You have got God's word in your mouth,' I felt as if a flash of spiritual electricity had then passed through me. But the old nature asserted itself right in the face of that word, and refused for awhile to receive the death wound. I sat all day on a seat; I could neither speak nor think. I lay passive; all my past life and thoughts seemed to rush through me. I had the feeling that, could I have taken them down, there were materials in that day's thoughts for a lifetime's meditation; and yet that they were not mine, for I seemed not to think, but to be thought upon. Now that must be not an infrequent experience—the *shock*, when all that is within rises up and refuses to be slain, accompanied too with a desire to be slain by the only bloodless Conqueror, till at length the soul yields, and dies that it may live. That moment, when I was conscious of a revulsion against my renovation, has entered as a *fact* into all my subsequent theologising. But there is not always pain at the new birth of the soul. God forbid that my way of coming to Him should be at all a common one. If a man feels, as I then felt, what sin really

designs, that it really designs decide, his mind may indeed stagger for a time. It is just because God is usually 'not in all our thoughts,' that this is not realised.

"If we are to be saved it must be by God, or by man, and *how grandly by the God-Man*. I cannot take you, my friend, to the centre of all things. You have read the Gospels. Well, can you conceive anything more beautiful than the character of Jesus Christ? Is it not the perfection of humanity? Could you have invented it? No, the inventor would be greater than the invention. Jesus Christ, then, is the perfection of humanity; its ideal made real.

"It is a holy will that rules the Universe. The law ordained 'thou shalt love,' and love ordained that law. Man could not keep it, and love ordained a Gospel; that Gospel is 'God so loved.' Thus, 'thou shalt love' is the whole of the law; 'God so loved' is the whole of the Gospel. That is so clear that it is at once Law and Gospel for children and for savages; but it is so deep in its limpid clearness that no philosopher can fathom it."

Shall we add another witness to the way of life? Consider Pascal, a man of similar experience and similar insight into the philosophy of faith, of whose fragmentary *Thoughts*, never elaborated into the evidential work he intended, we are reminded by the sayings of Dr. Duncan. Behold the inward revelation of God to the soul as described in his memorable words—words written by his hand, and worn by him

(the paper original being folded in a parchment copy) till the day of his death:—

"The year of grace 1654. Monday, 23rd November. Day of St. Clement, Pope and Martyr, and others in the Martyrology. Eve of St. Chrysogone, Martyr, and others. From about half-past ten in the evening to half-past twelve. Fire. God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers and savants. Assurance, assurance. Feeling. Joy. Peace. God of Jesus Christ, my God and your God. Thy God shall be my God. Forgetfulness of this world and all but God. He is found only by ways taught in the Gospel. Greatness of the human soul. Righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee. Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy. I have separated myself from Him. 'They have forsaken Me the Fountain of living waters.' My God wilt Thou forsake me? Let me not be separated from Him eternally. This is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ; I have separated myself from Him. Let me never be separated from Him. He is retained only by the ways taught in the Gospel. Renunciation, total and sweet."

Later on in his *Thoughts* he writes: "It is the heart, not the reason, that discovers a God. This is faith; God is revealed to the heart, and not to the understanding. We know God only by Jesus Christ. Without the Scripture, whose only subject is Christ, we know nothing, and are involved in utter obscurity

as to the nature of God and of ourselves. Without Jesus Christ, man must be a creature of vice and misery; with Him, he is delivered from both. What being was ever so distinguished? The whole Jewish nation predicted His advent. The whole Gentile world afterwards adored Him. Both Jew and Gentile regard Him as their centre. Jesus Christ is the object of the two Testaments: of the Old, its expectancy; of the New, its model; of both, the centre. Christ announced the greatest truths with so much simplicity that they seemed to have been the result of no mental effort; and yet combined an originality and point, which fill us with admiration. How did the Evangelists learn the qualities of a perfectly heroic spirit, so as to transfer them to their portraiture of Jesus Christ? The more closely I examine these things the more I find my belief confirmed. The Jews, while hostile to us, are yet the most complete witnesses to the truth of those prophecies in which their own misery and blindness are predicted. In putting Christ to death to declare their rejection of Him as Messiah, the Jews furnished the most complete proofs of His Messiahship. In all this I find a perfect coherence and concatenation. On all these grounds I stretch out glad and eager hands to my Liberator—one who after His advent had been predicted during a period of two thousand years, visited at last this earth, to suffer and to die for me, at the precise time, and with all the circumstances, which had been so long foretold. The veil

which covers the truths of Scripture from the Jews equally hides them from mere nominal Christians, and from all who do not see the evil of their own nature. Learn, then, O proud being, the paradox which you constitute! Humble yourself, vain reason! be silent, weak nature! Know how man infinitely surpasses man; receive from your great Master that secret of your true condition of which you are so ignorant. Listen to the words of God."

Jonathan Edwards, a greater than either Duncan or Pascal in reasoning powers, is another witness to the reality and character of this inward revelation of God to the soul. "The first instance," says Edwards, "that I remember of that sort of inward sweet delight in God and divine things, that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Tim. i. 17, 'Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.' As I read the words there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense quite different from anything I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up in Him in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in Him for ever. . . . The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote in my meditations, appeared like such a little

white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrant; standing peacefully and lovingly in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms to drink in the light of the sun."

So speaks the Faith which, while it transcends Reason, is its counterpart in the constitution of the soul. Reason and Faith combine in the soul's completeness. We may say of them what that Christian philosopher, M'Cosh of Princeton in America, says of their embodiment in Science and Religion: "Let not Science and Religion be reckoned as opposing citadels, frowning defiance upon each other, and their troops brandishing their armour in hostile attitude. They have too many foes, if they would but think of it, in ignorance and prejudice, in passion and vice, under all their forms, to admit of their lawfully wasting their strength in a useless warfare with each other. Science has a foundation, and so has Religion; *let them unite their foundations*, and the basis will be broader, and they will be two compartments of one great fabric reared to the glory of God. Let the one be the outer, and the other the inner court. In the one, let all look, and admire, and adore; and in the other, let those who have faith kneel, and pray, and praise. Let the one be the sanctuary where human learning may present its

richest incense as an offering to God; and the other, the holiest of all, separated from it by a veil now rent in twain; and in which, on a blood-sprinkled mercy seat, we pour out the love of a reconciled heart, and hear the oracles of the living God."¹

But Faith and Reason are more than counterpart foundations in God's Temple; they are corresponding faculties in the living soul of man. Beautifully portrayed in this their intimate living association are they in that noble creation of art in which Reason is represented as a warrior, clad in armour, climbing sword in hand the steep mountain, planting amid lingering mists his feet upon its rocky summit; while Faith as a bright angel soars beside him on outstretched wings towards a still higher sphere! Beneath them lies the darkness of earth; above them shine the stars of heaven. The countenance of Reason is sternly earnest, while the face of Faith is peaceful and radiant. Reason, looking downwards on the Rock on which it plants its feet, grasps with the right hand the sword, while with the left it lightly leans on the shoulder of Faith. Faith gazing only heavenwards on the Vision of the Divine, folds its hands in prayer, needing no earthly support. Both have come from God. Both ascend to Him. Free, yet bound together; distinct and widely different, yet for ever united in their act and aim, they seek and find in God their source, their centre, and their home.

¹ *The Method of Divine Government*, p. 451.

CONCLUSION

IN their presentation of the facts of religion as contrasted with the speculations of Philosophy, the foregoing pages set forth the Divine work of the Redemption of the World in its historic and chronologic environment. We find in the Bible a history of Redemption, or of the great work of the recovery of mankind from a condition of sin and ruin which God has been carrying on from age to age. That history is presented in two forms, as a narrative of the past, and a prophecy of the future, the second completing the first. Like the frame of man, this history is *dicentric*, or adjusted both to a life centre and to a centre of rule or government, the *heart* and *head* of the system. The first advent of Christ is the *vital* centre of the world's history, the centre of the convergence and divergence of its streams. Jewish, Greek, and Roman history supply the moral, intellectual, and political antecedents which prepared the way for the advent of Christ to redeem the world by His atoning death; while the existence and history of the Christian Church spring from that advent, and represent its world-wide effects. On the other hand, the course of the four great Empires of

Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome has as *its goal* the kingdom of God connected in prophecy with the second advent of Christ, as the King and Judge of mankind.

This twofold course of history *has a revealed Chronology to which the revolutions of the solar system are adjusted.* In that Chronology, which constitutes a *system of weeks* on various scales, the "70 weeks" of Prophecy terminate with the first advent of Christ; while the "7 times" of Prophecy terminate with the manifestation of His kingdom, connected in Scripture with His second advent in power and glory. These revealed chronological periods have an *astronomical value*, including cycles of solar and lunar revolution, of such accuracy as to afford a basis for the construction of Astronomical Tables of Equinoxes and New and Full Moons for thousands of years; which is proved by the fact that such Tables have been prepared and published by the author of this volume. They are also measured by a remarkable series of Analogous Revolutions of the Planets, forming a continuation and extension of the Prophetic Times; and thus by the Revolutions of the Solar System as a whole. The system of Times and Seasons thus unfolded may be regarded as the Vertebral Column of Redemption history, giving order and stability to its complex elements. The evidential value of this history and chronology of Redemption is very great. By its means the work of Redemption is seen as an order of events designed and provided for from the

foundation of the world, and therefore as *the work of the Author of Nature*. This sublime fact is a refutation of the theory of a blind undirected Evolution of Nature and man. It disproves the theory of Naturalism, and is an answer to Agnosticism and other forms of error. It is the refutation of hostile Philosophies, New Theologies, and "oppositions of Science falsely so called": and establishes Revealed Religion on a basis "sure as the stars."

A knowledge of the history of Redemption, and of the revealed system of Times and Seasons measured by the Revolutions of the Solar System, is of great value and importance in the present day. We are living in times of a widespread departure from the Christian faith, foretold in prophecy as a sign of the approaching end of the age. The predicted course and chronology of Redemption history sheds a clear light on the political and religious events of the day in which we live, and indicates the nearness of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to prophecy is to succeed the providential destruction of the fourth, or Roman Empire, in its present ten-kingdomed apostate form.

While the historic and chronologic events, which form the frame or setting surrounding the Person of Christ, have no small interest and importance, their value is but slight in comparison with the Divine Personality they enshrine. Jesus Christ, according to the witness of Scripture, is "God manifest in the

flesh." Christianity is "the Religion of the Incarnation." "The Person of Christ," says Dorner, "the Son of God and the Son of Man, forms the centre point of the Christian religion. . . . He is the perfect Lawgiver; He not only reveals but He realises as well, the holy and just, as the gracious will of God; hence is He also the Judge of the world. He has and exercises power over the whole world, even as He does over the spiritual; He communicates here the forgiveness of sins, and the Holy Ghost; there, eternal felicity: and the summit of the latter is ever formed by perfect fellowship with His Person. He has left His followers only in appearance; for wherever two or three are assembled in His name, there is He in the midst of them: and He is with His own always, even until the end of the world. (Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20.) To know Christ in this nearness belongs consequently, characteristically, to the *Christian worship*; and the meal of His institution is appointed as the highest means for the enjoyment of this nearness for the Church on earth (Matt. xxvi. 26-28)."¹

Facts constrain us to look upon Christianity "not as a power that has sprung up out of the hidden depths of man's nature, but one that descended from above, when heaven opened itself anew to man's long alienated race; a power which, as both in its origin and its essence it is exalted above all that human nature can create out of its own resources, was

¹ *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, vol. i. p. 60.

designed to impart to that nature a new life, and to change it in its inmost principles." So writes Neander, that profound Christian thinker, in his *History of the Christian Church*.

Not "from the depths of man's nature"; not of men; but from heaven, from the God of Light and Love, is this religion of light and love; "a power," a miracle-working power, "exalted" above all that man can create; infinitely transcending his resources; superhuman alike in "origin" and "essence"; imparting to human nature "a new life"; the life of God in the soul of man; and thus changing it "in its inmost principles": such is Christianity.

Vinet, the Christian philosopher of Lausanne, whose *Studies of Pascal* are familiar to many, described Christianity as "*love revealed under its highest form*." The highest thing in heaven or earth is love; the highest truth is that "God is love"; the highest revelation of the love of God is Christ; that blessed Being who is "embodied benevolence," and whose Cross is the loftiest symbol of self-sacrificing love.

"Herein is love," cries John the Apostle, as though it was nowhere else; for though it filled every heart this would remain its transcendent manifestation.

In this Christianity is its own witness. Other evidence it has, but this is its brightest evidence. If God is morally excellent—and how can we conceive Him otherwise—if God is "Light" and

"Love," this religion of light and love so worthy of Him must be from Him.

"Greater love hath no man than this," said Jesus Christ of the love revealed in Him.

Measure, if you can, the height from which He descended; measure the depth to which He stooped; measure then the height to which He raises the sinful and the lost whom He has redeemed; then may you measure the love of God in Christ; but to do this is impossible, it "passes knowledge." Yes, Christianity, whose law is love, is "love revealed under its highest form."

But cold and colourless are such words, though words of truth, to set forth the Person and Religion of Jesus Christ.

"Who that one moment has the least descried Him,
Dimly and faintly, hidden and afar,
Doth not despise all excellence beside Him,
Pleasures and powers that are not and that are;
Ay, amid all men bear himself thereafter,
Smit with a solemn and a sweet surprise;
Dumb to their scorn; and turning on their laughter,
Only the dominance of earnest eyes."

See this in Paul the Apostle, blinded as he was, and then illuminated by "the revelation of Jesus Christ." How language fails him ever after, when he would testify of Him. He lays his finger on his lips, whispering "gift unspeakable"; love "passing knowledge," filling the heart with "peace passing all understanding." Against the things of earth he

measures the "far more exceeding and eternal weight" of the glory of things divine. The path of his thought is not the returning circle, but the hyperbola. Let the reader look at the Greek of the passage, and he will see what we mean.

And thus Peter too was carried away by the knowledge of Christ, and the experience of the religion He brought into the world, to rejoice with "joy unspeakable and full of glory." In these experiences Christianity is its own witness; its divinity is self-evident; it shines with no borrowed light, but with its own native brightness and glory.

Reader, wouldst thou comprehend Christianity? Study Christ, for Christianity is Christ. All the truths of Christianity, "all its motives, all its glory, are summed up in Him. He is its Alpha and Omega; the embodiment of all it teaches, all it prescribes, all it promises." So wrote Tulloch in his *Christ of the Gospels and Modern Criticism*, and he did not say too much in saying this. The truth of every word of this assertion can be verified. Christ embodied the perfection He taught; and embodies the glory He promises. He is His own religion; the object of its faith, its love, its hope; the soul and secret of its life. Herein He stands completely alone. There is nothing known to man wherewith we can compare Him.

Reader, do you doubt that the supernatural has occurred in the history of the race? Do you doubt that there has been a divine intervention in the

course of history on man's behalf, to raise him from a condition of moral darkness and death, and impart to him the knowledge and life of God? Place yourself in the presence of Christ. Consider His character and aims. Listen to His words. Behold His works. Read afresh the Gospels, and as you do lift up your eyes from His utterances and deeds to Himself. Ask yourself what manner of Man is this that speaks such words, and does such deeds. Was He earthly in His aims, limited or local in His teachings? Or were His aims and teachings stamped with the character of sacredness and universality? Did He not transcend the Jew, the Greek, the Roman? Contrast Him with Moses and the Rabbis; with Socrates; with Cæsar. Do you not realise His unlikeness to them all? He was no legalist, no philosopher, no ruthless conqueror. Yet He established law, unveiled truth, founded a kingdom.

Nature acts from within; art and conquest and civilisation from without; Christ, like nature, wrought by internal means inscrutable to sense and observation; without force of philosophic argument, or military arms; without the attractions of wealth or advantage; by the simple proclamation of truth, by the example of love, by the secret operation of spiritual life, He founded the kingdom of God, the city of souls, the life of heaven upon earth. Behold His attitude; listen to His words. While He treats the law and prophets as authoritative, and affirms that the Scriptures cannot be broken, He corrects

the morality of Moses' teachings, substituting His "I say unto you" for earlier imperfect revelations. He speaks with authority, not as the scribes. He does not say, like the prophets, "Thus saith the Lord," but "Verily, verily, I say unto you." "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

See how, refuting the tradition of the scribes and elders, and denouncing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, He makes religion inward, a thing of spirit and of truth. Look at His revelation of the Father, of Himself the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; these higher truths that like the azure sky overarched the vast range of His teachings! Hear His witness to Himself, as "the Light of the world," a truth verified how gloriously by subsequent history; as "the Good Shepherd," "the True Vine," "the Resurrection and the Life," the Way to the Father, the Revelation of the Father, as One with the Father; as the Saviour, Redeemer, Judge of mankind! Look at the blending of all that is morally beautiful with all that is most sublime in Him!

"Jesus, there is no dearer name than Thine
Which Time has graven on his mighty scroll;
No wreaths nor garlands ever did entwine
So fair a Temple of so vast a Soul."

We speak of the beautiful and the sublime in nature; behold the beautiful and the sublime in Him. In Switzerland we see the loveliness of

summer scenes, of verdant valley and vineclad slope, sleeping at the feet of winter, at the base of towering Alps crowned with everlasting snows.

'Tis thus in Christ, in whom the beautiful and the awful meet and mingle; that Christ who, while He realised the ideal of humanity, manifested the glory of divinity. How near to men, how far from men, was He! Stooping beneath them in His lowly service, how He rises above them in self-conscious greatness, in wisdom, power, and glory. The human and the divine were interwoven in Him, forming a marvellous inseparable unity. See how the two elements blend in His utterances.

"I receive not testimony from man, but these things I say that ye might be saved." Are these the words of a mere man? "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" And this He speaks of the Jewish nation as a whole. Was this the language of a mere prophet? He looks on a world groaning beneath intolerable burdens, and cries, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He looks on the soul of man, unsatisfied with all that earth can afford, longing for better things, thirsting for righteousness and immortality, and cries, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of the innermost depths of his being shall flow rivers of living water." "The water that I shall give him

shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Did ever any other speak words like these? Have we not in these and such words of Christ a blending of pity and power, most Godlike and divine?

"O Righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee." "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." See how in the hour of His betrayal, in the garden of His agony, in the hall of His mockery and condemnation, and when hanging on the cruel cross, He rises above the despairing thoughts of His disciples, and the angry clamour of His foes, like the sun conquering the clouds and storms of heaven in its ascending brightness; hear Him amid the tempest, saying, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." See how He goes to the shameful death of the cross with the words of victory upon His lips, "I have overcome the world." "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Is this the manner of men?

Heinrich Heine said of the Bible in his amazement, sceptic as he was, at its character: "What a book! vast and wide as the world, rooted in the abysses of creation, and towering up beyond the blue secrets of heaven! Sunrise and sunset, promise and fulfilment, birth and death, the whole drama of humanity are all in this book! Its eclipse would be the return of chaos, its extinction the epitaph of history." Thus,

and with nobler reason, and fuller meaning, can we speak of Christ, for He, the living Person who is the central theme of that book, stands related as no book can to the totality of history and of the human race, linking God with man, the temporal and the finite with the infinite and the eternal.

And His work abides. The name of the Father whom He revealed remains on the lips and in the hearts of His disciples. In their experience sin has lost its dominion, and the grave its fears. To them "He stands brightly where the shade is, holding the keys of death and hades." To commemorate His dying love is still their constant act; to celebrate His risen power, their ever-returning joy. To them religion has become a life flowing from the inexhaustible fountain of Deity. No power of man, no lapse of time, has brought to nought their faith. That faith has been matched against the world-conquering might of the Cæsars, and the persecutions of apostate ages, and still survives. Not the lions of the Colosseum, nor the horrors of the Catacombs, nor the pains of the rack, or flames of the stake, have been able to conquer it. Like that bush which burned with fire and was not consumed, the faith of the Church has proved imperishable. Storms have beaten against that Church, floods have overflowed it, winds and waves have raged against it in vain. Thrones and empires have risen and fallen in the lapse of ages, strewing their wrecks upon the shores of Time, but that Church remains. Her light still

shines, her voice still vibrates, her conquests still multiply. "Because I live," said Jesus Christ, "ye shall live also." Her life is "hid with Christ in God," and is unassailable by the antagonistic forces of her enemies. Evermore around her, above the shades of mortality, circle the stars of God. The moon as it walks in its brightness, the planets as they revolve in their glory, measure the times and seasons of her pilgrimage. In the silence of their ceaseless and majestic movements, traversing the immensities of space, they mark out the appointed limits of her earthly sojourn, and militant estate. Exalted far above the changes and fluctuations of terrestrial things, they reflect in their undimmed and deathless glory *that character of stability* which Christ conferred upon the Church by His divine decree,—"*On this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"

One final word. In the foregoing pages the Speculations of Philosophy, as contrasted with the Certainties of Religion, have occupied our attention. *The purpose of God, His revealed purpose* in the failure of the one, and the success of the other, may well terminate with its illuminating beam our study of Foundation Truths.

Behold that Purpose!

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

"Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

"For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. . . .

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. i. 19-31).

APPENDIX



THE following Table of the Astronomical Observations contained in Ptolemy's *Almagest*, exhibits the fact that all his dates are reckoned from the Era of Nabonassar, Feb. 26, Thoth I., Nabonassar I. (B.C. 747), the date which we have taken as the starting-point, or *terminus a quo*, of the four kingdoms, occupying with their joint duration "The Times of the Gentiles."

Astronomical Observations contained in Ptolemy's "Almagest."

Cent.	Nab. y.	Month.	Astronomical Event.	B.C.	Month.	Reign.
I.	27	i. 29	Lunar Eclipse	721	Mar. 19	Mardocempadi, i.
	28	i. 18	" "	720	Mar. 8	" 2.
		vii. 15	" "		Sept. 1	" 2.
II.	127	iii. 27	Lunar Eclipse	621	Apr. 22	Nabopolassar, 5.
III.	225	vii. 17	Lunar Eclipse	523	July 16	Cambyses, 7.
	246	xi. 28	" "	502	Nov. 19	Darii, 20.
	257	v. 3	" "	491	Apr. 25	" 31.
IV.	316	vii. 21	Summer Solstice	432	June 27	Ob. by Meton, Athens.
	366	i. 26	Lunar Eclipse	383	Dec. 23	Phanocratus.
		vii. 24	" "	382	June 18	" "
	367	i. 16	" "	382	Dec. 12	Evander.
V.	454	ii. 16	Occultation of β Scorpii by the Moon .	295	Dec. 21	Calippic Period, i. 36.
		v. 5	Conjunction of Moon and Spica Virginis	294	Mar. 9	" " i. 36.
	465	iii. 29	" " Pleiades .	283	Jan. 29	" " i. 47.
	466	i. 7	" " Spica Virginis	"	Nov. 9	" " i. 48.

V. (cont.)	468	viii. 29	Summer Solstice	280	June 27	Ob. by Aristarchus of Samos.
	476	iii. 20	Observation of Mars	272	Jan. 18	" Dionysius.
		xii. 17	" " Venus		Oct. 12	" Timocharis, Alexandria.
	484	" 21	" " "	265	" 16	" " "
		i. 18	" " Mercury		Nov. 15	" Dionysius.
	486	iv. 17	" " "	262	Feb. 12	" "
		vii. 30	" " "		May 25	" "
VI.	491	x. 30	" " "	257	Aug. 23	" "
		viii. 5	" " "		May 28	" "
	504	i. 27	Observation of Mercury	245	Nov. 19	Ob. by the Chaldeans.
	507	xi. 17	" " Jupiter	241	Sept. 4	" Dionysius.
	512	i. 9	" " Mercury	237	Oct. 30	" the Chaldeans.
	519	v. 14	" " Saturn	229	Mar. 1	" "
	547	xii. 16	Lunar Eclipse	201	Sept. 22	Calippic Period, ii. 54.
VII.	548	vi. 9	" " "	200	Mar. 20	" " ii. 55.
		xii. 5	" " "		Sept. 12	" " ii. 55.
	574	vii. 27	" " "	174	May 1	Philometer, 7.
	586	xii. 30	Autumnal Equinox	162	Sept. 27	Ob. by Hipparchus, Alexandria.
	589	Ep. 1	" " "	159	" 27	" " "
	590	Ep. 1	" " "	158	" 27	" " "
			" " "			" " "
VII.	602	vi. 27	Vernal Equinox	146	Mar. 24	Ob. by Hipparchus, Alexandria.
	603	Ep. 3	Autumnal Equinox		Sept. 27	" " "
		Ep. 4	" " "	145	" 26	" " "
	606	Ep. 4	" " "	142	" "	" " "
	607	v. 2	Lunar Eclipse	141	Jan. 27	Calippic Period, iii. 37.
	613	vi. 29	Vernal Equinox	135	Mar. 24	" " iii. 43.
		x. 4	Summer Solstice		June 26	Hipparchus at Alexandria.

Astronomical Observations contained in Ptolemy's "Almagest"—(continued).

Cent.	Nab. y.	Month.	Astronomical Event.	B.C.	Month.	Reign.
VII. (cont.)	620	vii. 1	Vernal Equinox	128	Mar. 23	Hipparchus at Alexandria.
		xi. 16	Second Dichotomy		Aug. 5	" at Rhodes.
	621	viii. 11	1. Lunar Distance from the Sun . .	127	May 2	" "
		x. 17	2. " " " " " "		July 7	" "
IX.	840	v. 2	Occultation of Pleiades by the Moon .	A.D. 92	Nov. 29	Domitian, 12.
	845	vi. 15	" " Spica Virginis by the Moon	98	Jan. 11	Ob. by Menelaus, Rome.
		vi. 18	" " β Scorpii (Antares) by the Moon		" 14	Trajan, I.
	872	ix. 17	Lunar Eclipse	125	Apr. 5	Hadrian, 9.
	874	ix. 7	Observation of Saturn	127	Mar. 26	" 11.
	875	iii. 21	" " Venus	"	Oct. 12	" 12.
	876	xi. 2	" " " "	129	May 20	" 13.
	877	xii. 18	" " Mercury	130	July 4	" 14.
	878	v. 26	" " Mars	"	Dec. 15	" 15.
	879	vii. 16	" " Mercury	132	Feb. 2	" 16.
		viii. 21	" " Venus		Mar. 8	" "
	880	iii. 7	Autumnal Equinox	133	Sept. 25	" 17.
		x. 20	Lunar Eclipse		May 6	" "
	881	xi. 1	Observation of Jupiter	134	" 17	" "
		xi. 18	" " Saturn		June 3	" "
	881	viii. 2	" " Venus	134	Feb. 18	" 18.
		xi. 18	" " Mercury		June 4	" "

IX. (cont.)	882	iii. 14	Observation of Mercury	134	Oct. 3	Hadrian, 19.
		iv. 2	Lunar Eclipse	"	" 20	" "
	883	viii. 6	Observation of Mars	135	Feb. 21	" "
		ix. 19	" " Mercury		Apr. 5	" "
	883	iii. 13	Culmination of the Moon	136	Oct. 1	" 20.
		viii. 19	Lunar Eclipse		Mar. 6	" "
	884	xii. 24	Observation of Saturn	137	July 8	" "
		ii. 13	" " Jupiter		Aug. 31	" 21.
	884	v. 2	" " Venus	138	Nov. 18	" "
		vi. 9	" " " "		Dec. 25	" "
	885	iii. 20	" " Jupiter	139	Oct. 8	Antoninus, I.
		xi. 20	" " Mercury		June 4	" "
	886	v. 29	" " Venus	139	Dec. 16	" 2.
		vi. 6	" " Saturn		" 22	" "
	886	vii. 25	Second Dichotomy	140	Feb. 9	" "
		viii. 9	" " " "		" 23	" "
	887	xi. 2	Observation of Mercury	141	May 17	" "
		xi. 12	" " Mars		" 27	" "
	887	xi. 15	" " " "	141	" 30	" "
		xii. 23	" " Mercury		July 8	" "
	888	xii. 26	" " Jupiter	141	" 11	" "
		iii. 9	Autumnal Equinox		Sept. 26	" 3.
	888	viii. 4	Observation of Venus	141	Feb. 18	" "
		ix. 7	Vernal Equinox		Mar. 22	" "
	889	xii. 11	Summer Solstice	141	June 25	" "
		vii. 18	Observation of Mercury		Feb. 2	" 4.
	898	i. 11	" " Venus	150	July 28	" 14.